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THE

TOWN AND BOROUGH

OF

LEOMINSTER;

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF ITS

ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY.

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BY THE

REV. GEO. FYLER TOWNSEND, M.A.,

Vicar of Leominster:

ALSO, A CHAPTER ON THE PARISH CHURCH AND PRIORY,

BY EDWARD A. FREEMAN, ESQ.

LEOMINSTER:
S. PARTRIDGE, BOOKSELLER, PUBLIC LIBRARY, BROAD STREET.
LONDON: MESSRS. ARTHUR HALL, & Co., PATERNOSTER ROW.

1863

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TO THE INHABITANTS OF

LEOMINSTER,

WITH SINCERE WISHES

FOR THE

INCREASE AND PROSPERITY

OF THEIR ANCIENT TOWN.

ERRATA.

Page 20, line 1 of Note, for *Lucton* read Luston.
Page 133, line 17, for *George III.* read George I.
Page 158, line 11, for *Baron Ginkle* read Earl of Lucan.
Page 200, line 21, for *April* read August.
Page 202, line 2, for *H* read W.
Page 260, line 4, for *Augustine* read Augustin.

GENERAL HISTORY OF LEOMINSTER.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.—A.D. 660 TO 1123.

CONTENTS.—The Plan of this Book.—Probable early origin of the Town.—First establishment of its Religious Foundation.—Various accounts of the origin of its Name.—First Religious Institution, a Monastery.—The destruction of the Town, during the first period, by the Welsh and by the Danes.—Leofric, the benefactor and founder of the second Religious Establishment.—The Abbess Edgiva.—Invasion of Gryffyd, and his retreat.—The effects of the Norman Conquest.—The origin of the Lord Marchers.—William Rufus at Leominster.—Account of the Manor from the Doomsday Survey.—Its great extent.—Its annexation to Reading by Henry I.—Other proofs of Henry's and Pope Innocent's favour.—Its Church a protection to Homicides.

THE GENERAL HISTORY of the Town and Borough of LEOMINSTER may be divided into three distinct, and plainly marked periods:—

I. From the first establishment of its Religious Foundation to its bestowal on the Abbey of Reading.

II. From its annexation to the Abbey of Reading to its Dissolution.

III. From its Attainder and Dissolution to the present time.

It will be the purpose of this first book to give a consecutive and connected narrative of the general history of this ancient Town. The subsequent books will set forth, in greater detail, a more minute account of the Church, Priory, Town; and of its other various antique buildings, customs, privileges, and institutions.

Although no particular mention is recorded in history of the first beginnings of the Town of Leominster, yet there are reasons to suppose that its origin may probably be traced up to the third and fourth centuries. Located in the neighbourhood of an ancient Roman highway, leading from Uriconium (Wroxeter) to Magna (Kenchester, near Hereford), surrounded by various flourishing Roman settlements, attractive in itself by its fertility of soil, its proximity to water, and by its sheltered site, Leominster was probably occupied as a seat of human habitations at a very early period. The event, however, which promoted at once its growth and its reputation was the establishment of a Religious Institution, A.D. 660, by Merewald, king of Mercia. This foundation, in accordance with the custom of those days, was associated with miracles. The legend* prevalent on this occasion is this: that Ealfrid, a priest of Northumbria, coming to the court of Merewald footsore, faint and weary, in the evening, sat himself down, and taking bread out of his wallet, eat it. While in the act of eating, a Lion appeared, who, on his offering him bread, mildly took it from his hand. The Lion, according to the narrative, was typical of Merewald, who, on the teaching of Ealfrid, from a fierce Pagan, became a mild and forbearing Christian. This legend, according to some persons, gives the name to Leominster; and Giraldus Cambrensis, Bishop of St. David's, in his narration of a journey through this part of the country, speaks of this Town under the title of "Leonis Monasterium."

The Town, however, had at this early period, a totally different name. "It was called, (says Camden),† Llanllieni,

* Penda, the king of Mercia, father of Merewald, had lately defeated Edwin, king of Northumberland, which fact establishes an acquaintance between the two courts. The legend is thus given by Leland:—"Apparuerat Leo Ealfrido apud Mercios cœnanti, cui cum panem manu porrexisset, mitis accepit. Leo autem ad Merevalem alludit, qui Paganus ferox, adveniente Ealfrido, mitis per fidem factus est. Unde locus ipse postea vertitur in Leonis Monasterium." Leland's Collectanea, Vol. I., p. 169.

† Fol. p. 690. Camden, however, is not quite consistent with himself; for in the preface to his book (p. 17) he gives another account. "Religious women, votaries of perpetual virginity, were called of the Gauls, Senæ, or

which signifies a Church of the Nuns: and it being certain that Merewalch, a Mercian king, founded here a Church for Nuns, to seek after another original of the name would be labour in vain." This labour has been successfully undertaken. A later historian, the learned local topographer, Mr. Blount, gives the following clear and succinct account of the origin of the present name.

"And since we are upon the derivation of the Town's name, though it is not much to the purpose, yet I am willing to cast in my own opinion. Doomsday is the most ancient and authentic record we have, and without doubt, the survey therein contained was made by persons of great knowledge and industry. There we find this Town written 'Leofminstre,' (Rex tenet Leofminstre) quasi, the Minster or Church of Leof, the usual contraction of Leofric, who was Earl of the Mercians, of whom this country was, and under his dominion. He was both valiant and pious, for King Canutus made him Captain General of his forces. He founded the great Monastery of Coventry, and in all likelihood, either built, or was benefactor to this Church and Nunnery. Leland insinuates the Church to have been built a little before the Conquest, so that whatever name the Town went by before, it is probable, in deference to him, it was thenceforth called Leofminstre. Besides, we find this Leofric was, in the beginning of Edward the Confessor's reign, styled only 'Comes Herefordiensium,' Earl of the Herefordshire men, and died in the thirteenth year of that King. Afterwards, as was usual in such names, the 'f' was left out, to render it

Lene, rather will I read it, if I durst: for such consecrated virgins, whom folks now name Nuns, the Britains, as it is in an old Glossarie, termed Leanes: whence a most ancient nunnery, Lean-minster, now called Lempster, drew the name."

Leland's Itinerary (Vol. VI., p. 51,) repeats this origin of the name: "Lean-minster, in Herefordshire, so caulled peradventure of Nunns in the Welsh speech, and not of a Lion."

There is one other derivation of the origin of the name which must not be entirely omitted, and which is found in the Addenda, No. 1, to Weaver's Monuments: "Leofmynster, Loveminster." Lambard calls it "Dearly beloved minster." Is was built A.D. 600, by Merewald, *i. e.* renowned governor, and Prince of Mercia.

more easy in pronunciation, so it became 'Leominster,' or more vulgarly, 'Lemster.'" Blount's MSS.

The probable solution of these various accounts is this: that there was a twofold name given to the Town. It would be originally known, and is probably still known among the Welsh borderers, by the name given it in Camden "Llanlieni." But as the language of this district gradually became more prescribed and settled, and as the English element obtained greater preponderance, the Welsh name of Llanlieni would by common consent and usage be superseded by the English name of Leofminstre. The word thus written in the Doomsday Book, prepared by the order of William the Conqueror, seems to sanction its derivation from Leofric as being the most probable origin of the present name of Leominster.

It has been a subject of controversy whether the first institution of Merewald was established for Monks or for Nuns. The evidence is in favour of the former* supposition; in as much as Ealdfrid, who converted the King to Christianity, was made the head of this religious house, which he would not have been, had it been designed for women. There is every reason to suppose that Woolpher,† the royal brother of Merewald, became, after the death of Ealdfrid, the head of the Monastery at Leominster. Certain it is that the religious establishment founded by the bounty of King Merewald, rose rapidly in importance, not less by the fame of the piety of its inmates than by the costly gifts‡ of a succession of royal

* Leland and Camden make "Llanlieni" the British name, which they say signifies the "Place of the Nuns;" and this may be the reason why they are both so positive that there were Nuns placed here at first; but from Ealdfrid, who converted the founder to Christianity, being made head of this religious house, it is more probable that it was originally for men, and I choose to place the Secular Priests here before the Nuns, who were here last before the Conquest and Dissolution. Bishop Tanner's Notitia, Leland's Collectanea, Vol. II., p. 169.

† Etheldredus successor fuit fratris sui Wulpheri Regis, qui transactis in regno xxix annis de Rege fit monachus, spreto fastu regalis pompæ.

‡ Domus autem fundata regaliter solidatur, rebusque et opibus regiis opulenter ditatur, cui beatus prælicitur Eadfridus, cujus doctrina veræ lucis gratiâ primo refulsit. Leland, Vol. IV.

benefactors, and by reason of those very gifts in those dangerous days it would present a strong temptation to every intestine marauder, and every foreign foeman.

Leominster, during this first era of our history, was, on three different occasions, overwhelmed with a sudden and violent desolation.

In 760 A.D., the Welsh overran these border countries with a numerous force, and caused much havoc and destruction. "This was the year of Christ when a battle between the Britons and Saxons took place, to wit, the action of Hereford."*

The Danes, (who, A.D. 980, occupied the greater part of England, and saw a succession of Danish monarchs seated on the throne) penetrated into this part of Mercia. Encamping on the hill yet called "Deane," or "Danefield," they plundered the Town and Monastery, and after cruelly massacreing, as was their wont, many of the Monks and Inhabitants, quickly departed, laden with the spoil and riches of the country. This invasion of the Danes caused the impoverishment and dispersion of the Monks, and led to the establishment of a new institution of Nuns, which, in a few years, obtained the patronage and protection of Earl Leofric† as its benefactor.

This Leofric was a most influential nobleman, possessed of titles and large estates in Herefordshire. From these he amply endowed various Churches and Monasteries, particularly those of Wenlock, Coventry,‡ and Leominster. He was the husband of that Lady Godiva, of whom the legend is told that, with a true woman's self devotion, she rode veiled only with her hair through the streets of Coventry, to gain from her Lord certain privileges for its Inhabitants.

* BRUT Y TYWYSOGION, or the Chronicles of the Princes, p. 7. Edited by the Rev. John Williams ap Ithel, under the Master of the Rolls.

† "Leofricus, filius Leofwini ducis Merciorum obiit. Qui consilio Dei, et B. Mariæ cultricis Godgivæ uxoris suæ ditavit et reparavit Monasterium Leonense juxta Herefordiam, &c." Gale's Scriptor. Vet., Book VI. of Ralph Higden's Polychronicon, p. 282.; and Malmesbury's History of the Kings. Church Historians, Vol. III., Part I., p. 184, A.D. 1042.

‡ Earl Leofric built the Monastery here with so great a bravery of gold and silver, that off one beam were scraped fifty marks of silver, and yet it was never missed.

The new religious establishment was soon involved in trouble and disaster. Edgiva, the Abbess, more sinned against than sinning, became a victim to the lawless condition of the times. "This year (1046) went Earl Sweyne into Wales, and Griffyd, king of the northern men with him, and hostages were delivered to him. As he returned homeward, he ordered the Abbess of Leominster to be fetched to him, and he kept her as long as he list, after which he let her go home."*

This conduct of Sweyne, even in those evil days, brought with it its own punishment, for it not only led to the misery of Edgiva, and to the subsequent extinction of the convent, but it involved him in a dishonourable exile and perpetual expatriation.†

In 1055, this same prince Griffyd, at the head of the confederated chieftains of Wales, again laid waste the country of Hereford. He defeated Radulf, the Earl or Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, with his forces, retained possession for some time of the Towns of Hereford and Leominster, and laid heavy exactions on their respective religious institutions and Inhabitants.‡ Nor did he retire to his native fastnesses until he was driven back by Harold, who brought against him the better disciplined army of the Crown. This warlike Prince died in 1063, and Harold, his conqueror, lost in 1066, at the battle of Hastings, both his life and kingdom.

The Norman Conquest affected in a peculiar and especial manner these border countries. The bold followers of the Duke of Normandy soon obtained possession of the extensive estates held in these districts by Harold and his followers. These Norman Knights and Barons found themselves the dwellers in a

* See Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

† Interea Swanus comes, Godwini comitis et Gytæ filius, qui relicta prius Anglia, quod Edgivam Leonensis monasterii abbatissam quam corruperat in matrimonium habere non liceat, Danemarcam adierat. Hoveden, Annales, Ed. Savile, 1596, fol. 252-6.

‡ Grifinus Riderch occidit et Herefordiam vastavit. Annales Cambriæ, p. 25. Lately published under the direction of the Master of the Rolls.

debateable land, the occupiers of a disputed frontier* territory, with no acknowleged boundaries, but varying with the greater or less success of the contending parties, and liable at any moment to the invasion and inroads of armed hordes of hardy mountaineers. The very necessity of their position compelled the erection of strong castles, the retention of a vast number of retainers, ever prepared for the fray, and the establishment of the means of mutual assistance on any sudden emergency. A common danger created a common bond of union, and these Knights and Barons formed a kind of confederacy, or combination arising from, and adapted to, the perilous circumstances in which they were placed. Some of the noblest companions of the Conqueror obtained fiefs in these marches, and became founders of the great historic families of March, Mortimer, Lacy, Montgomerie, Bohun, and others. The means of executing rapid justice, of collecting considerable forces, of defending themselves by their own arms against marauders, involved the possession of certain privileges, and of comparatively greater independence of the Sovereign. Hence the Lord Marchers were allowed their courts, and rights,† and were not only enabled by their combination to form an efficient barrier to the kingdom, and to control their troublesome neighbours, but by their union, their warlike prowess, their distance from the capital, and by their own individual importance, came to possess considerable

* This country was called "Mearce," from a Saxon word signifying "a limit." The borders towards Wales were called by a Saxon name, "The Marches," being the limits between the English and Welsh. In this country certain noblemen were entitled "Barones Marchiæ," who exercised within their respective liberties a sort of palatine jurisdiction, and held courts of justice to determine controversies, and prescribed for several privileges and immunities, one of which was that the King's writs should not run here in some causes—but peaceful times and royal authority did by degrees abolish the rights of these Lords. Camden, fol. p. 645, 698.

† One of the privileges of the Lord Marchers was to provide silver spears to support the square canopy of purple silk at the Coronation of Kings and Queens of England.

In later times the Crown established a separate Court for the principality of Wales and the Borders. The Lord President of this Court lived in semi-royal state at Ludlow. Prince Arthur, son of Henry VIII., and other members of royal families, held the office.

power and authority in the State, and on certain occasions held in their hands the destinies of the kingdom. From the death of the Conqueror to the termination of the wars of the Roses, they were the objects of the fear, or of the favour, of the Sovereign, and they were more especially courted by those Monarchs whose policy or ambition led them to seek the conquest of Wales. An acquaintance to some extent with the existence and authority of the Lord Marchers is necessary to a right understanding of the history of the borders.

During the reign of William I. the Welsh made no serious incursions into England, but on the accession of his son they again broke out into such extreme hostilities that he was compelled to visit these districts, and to assume in his own person the office and function of a Lord Marcher. William Rufus is recorded to have taken up his abode for some time at Wigmore Castle, and to have fortified to some extent the Town of Leominster. In all probability, therefore, he has been received, in solemn procession, within the precincts of our noble Parish Church, and has ridden on his war-horse, in martial pageantry, through our streets. He was, by inheritance, the proprietor of the Town, and Lord of the various Manors of Leominster.

The Doomsday Survey gives a full account of these Manors, and proves them to be a possession not altogether unworthy even of a royal owner. "The King holds Leofminstre. Editha the Queen held it, with its sixteen Members, (or Herewicks,) Luston, Yarpole, Aymestrey (Elmodestreu), Brimfield, Aston, Stockton, Stoke, Marston, Upton, Hope, Brierley, Ivington, Cholstrey (Ceylestreu), Leinthall, Gedefen,* and Fernelau."

* The only two places in this list, of the identity of which any doubt can be entertained, are "Gedefen" and "Fernelau." This latter word is plainly Farlowe, near the Clee Hill, which belongs to Herefordshire, though detached from the County. Among the receipts of the Manor of Leominster, in the time of Henry VIII., we have this entry: "Et xxs. de redditu Villati de Fferlow in Com: Salopiæ per annum."—Acct. in Augmentation Office.

Gedefen is "Edwin," or, "Edwin Ralph." Edwin Ralph and Butterley, though locally in Broxash, and contiguous to Bromyard, belong to Wolphy Hundred, and their owners always did service at the Hundred Courts of

In this Manor and its members were:—

Eighty Hydes, in demesne.

[Each hyde contained one hundred and ninety-two acres; and by a law of King Ethelred, every three hundred and ten hides of land were liable to furnish a ship of war for the service of the kingdom, and every eight hides were to provide a jack, a coat of defensive armour; so that there is good reason to speak of Leominster, in the time of the Conquest, as an extensive Manor.]

Thirty Plough lands.

Six Priests or Presentations.*

[These were Brimfield, Hope, Middleton, Kimbolton, Luston, Yarpole, and the returns of the Bailiff's accounts in the time of Henry VIII., at the confiscation of the Monastery, mention the payments to the Chaplains for celebrating divine offices in these respective Churches.]

Leominster. In the Testa de Nevil Survey, Ralph Yedefen was a Juror at the Lempster Court, and there is this entry: "Rads de Yedefen tenet in Yedefen et Buterl' de veti feoff. feodn̄ unius militis de Epo Heref: sed nesciunt de quo idem Epis. tenet feodū illud in capite."—The Author is indebted to Mr. W. H. Cooke, for this satisfactory identity of Gedefen as "Edwin Ralph.',

Testa de Nevil: sive Liber Feodorum. An antient list of Fees holden of the King, compiled near the close of the reign of Edward II., or at the commencement of Edward III. How this name arose is not ascertained. There are two persons from either of whom it may be derived, viz.: Ralph de Nevill, an Accountant in the Exchequer, and collector of Aids in the reign of Henry III.; or Tollan de Neville, a Justice Itinerant of the same reign.—Commissioners of Public Records Report, Appendix K 2, p. 143.

* Et in Stipend. unius Capellani divina celebran in Ecclia de Middleton p. ann. prout allo in Comptis præsen. .. xxiijs. iiijd.
Et in Stipend unius Capellani divina celebran in Ecclia de Brymfield p. ann. .. .. xls.
Et in Stipend. unius Capellani in Ecclia de Kymbalton per ann. .. .. lxxiijs. iiijd.
Et in Stipend. unius Capellani in Eccles. de Luston et Eyton per ann. .. .. .. iiij*l.*
Et in Stipend. un. Capellan. in Eccles. de Yarpoll .. lxvjs. viijd.

Summa xvj*l.* iijs. iiijd.

From the Accompts rendered in the xxxiv reign of Henry VIII. of the payments made at the time of the Dissolution of the Monastery, from the Record Office.—From MSS. collections in the possession of the late Mr. Bird of Mordiford.

Eight Præpositi, or Bailiffs.

[Whose office it was to collect rents, to levy distresses, to keep the peace, and to do all the office of equity and right between the Lord and Tenants.]

Eight Bedelli, Under Bailiffs, Jailors, or such like.

Eight Radchenisters or Radmans.

[These were freeholders, who served their Lord on horseback, and rode with him to the wars.]

Two hundred and twenty four Villains, or Labourers.

Eighty-one Borderers.*

[An inferior tenure, holding lands on the condition of looking after the farm horses, making hay, &c. Lands on this tenure were called Bord-lands.]

Eighty-two Men and Women Servants.

[Shepherds, Cow-herds, Dairy-maids.]

Eight Millers.

Two hundred and thirty Plough Lands.

[Which the Villains ploughed, and sowed with their own corn.]

The following rents were paid:—

By the Villains, £11 4s. 2d.

Radmans, 14s. 4d., and three quarts of honey.

Millers, £3 13s., and thirty stychæ of eels, thirty on each stycha.

For woods rooted up, exsartis, *i. e.* for lands cleared of wood and turned to tillage, 17s.

The woods in this Manor were six leagues (or miles) long, and three broad, and paid £1 2s., of which 5s. was allowed for buying wood for Wich,† (ex his dantur v. sol. ad ligna emenda

* This class of servile tenants, often named in Doomsday, had a bord or cottage, with a small parcel of land allowed them, on condition that they should supply the Lord with poultry and eggs, and other small productions, for his board, or entertainment.—Jacob's Law Dictionary, and Mamecestre, printed by the Cheetham Society, Vol. I., p. 147.

† "Wych" is used in the Doomsday Book for the primitive salt-pits which abounded in England at the time of the Survey, and the name is still retained in the terminations of Droitwich, Nantwich, &c. The wood thus allowed for, was used in boiling the water for evaporation. The exact spots, or places, where these Wyches existed are most of them lost sight of. The

in Wich,) and in return for which wood, thirty mittæ* of salt were paid from the salt works, (et habentur xxx^{a} mittæ salis deinde.)

The owner of every ten hogs, for pannage [*i. e.* leave to feed an the acorns and must in the woods,] gave one hog.

There was an Aery of hawks kept in the wood.

The Justices superintending the survey say, if this Manor was to be delivered, *i. e.*, let out, its worth would be £120 per annum. The survey gives a long list of names of those persons who held lands under, or paid rents to the Lord.

Abstract demesne rents	£23	0	0
Sixteen Members, or Herewicks' rent	35	15	0
Foreign suits and rents, *i. e.*, lands out of the Manor	4	6	1
	£63	1	4

This estimation of the value of the rental is exclusive of provision for the Nuns. ("Hoc manerium est ad firmam LX. lib. præter victum Monialium)." Among those who paid these rents appear the names of Ralph de Mortimer, Roger de Lacy, Lewinus Latinar, (the interpreter) Osborn, son of Richard, (the owner of Richard's Castle,) the Abbess (probably of Leominster), Drogo of the Town of Pons, Ralph de Todeni, William de Scohies;

difficulty of carriage was so great that this wood could not be taken to any great distance. There might have been a local Wyche, to supply the Manor with salt, but no trace nor tradition of it remains:—or, the nearest spot may have been at Saltmoor, or at Caynham. (See Wright's "Ludlow," p. 25.) Sir Henry Ellis makes these remarks on this subject: "The frequent occurrence of Salt Works in the Doomsday Survey, requires explanation. Those mentioned in Counties bordering on the Coasts, were unquestionably ponds and pans for procuring the brine salt by evaporation. Those in more inland parts were what are called the refineries of brine, or Salt Springs.

"At the time of forming the Survey, Rock or Fossil Salt was not known in England. The first pits of it were accidentally discovered in Cheshire, (on the very spot where Doomsday mentions Brine Springs,) as late as the year 1670. (See the Philos. Transact., vol. 5, p. 2015.)

"In the returns for Kent and Sussex, "Salinæ" occur frequently: though in Surrey, Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, *Herefordshire*, Warwickshire, and Shropshire, we find them more sparingly entered." (Ellis's Doomsday Survey, Vol. I., p. 126.)

* The "Mitta" was a measure of salt—according to Kilham, ten bushels.

which prove that the Conqueror had bestowed the manors on some of his own followers and companions in arms.*

This rich† Manor, however, was not long a fief of the Crown. Henry I., the successor of Rufus, transferred it as an appanage for ever to the Monastery of Reading. It may be interesting to read the substance of the original Charter. "Henry, by the grace of God, King of the English, and Duke of the Normans, to his Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, and Barons, and to all Christians, as well present as to come, Greeting:—Know ye, that three Abbyes were formerly destroyed in the Kingdom of England, their sins requiring it (peccatis suis exigentibus); that is to

* The Author is indebted for the explanation of many of the above terms to the notes written by Mr. Ansted, Garter King of Arms, in Lord Conyngsby's transcript from the Doomsday Survey.

† This is a most suitable epithet:—for the sixteen Herewicks mentioned in the Doomsday Survey afford only a faint idea of the extent of Henry I's gift to the Abbey of Reading. In proof of this we give a copy of the writ, by which the Royal gift was confirmed to Hugh, the first Lord Abbot of Reading, by the then Bishop of Hereford. The Reader will find the number of Parishes contained in the liberties of Leominster to be very large, and that the actual possession is guaranteed as belonging to the Abbey, on the most unmistakeable evidence and enquiry.

"Ego, Dei gratia, Heref. Epssc: Richardus, manu mea propria concessi et confirmavi Ecclesiæ Radingiæ, et ejus abbati primo, Domino Hugoni, Eccl. S. Petri de Leominstre cum omnibus ad ipsam pertinentibus Parochiis, scilicet.

Bradeforda	Bradford	Braedfeld	Broadfield
Ach	Ash	Hamptonæ	Hamptons
De Leena Haylane	quæ ambæ magis proximæ sunt Leominstre	Forda	Ford
De Diliga Dishley		Heanoura	Hennor
Lunthelega	Luntley	Eatuna	Eaton
Chinardeslega	Kinnersley	Herntura	Hernton
Winnetone	Winton	Stocktuna	Stockton
Utra que Sernesfield	Sarnsfield (Upper and Lower)	Esscetuna	Ashton
		Bromefelda	Brimfield
Titellega	Titley	Uptuna	Upton
Hopa	Hope	Midatuna	Middleton
Wavertuna	Wharton	Dreituna	Dryton
Niwetuna	Newton	Hamenessa	Hamnish
Gatredchopa	Gattertop	Whiale	Whial
Stokes	Stoke	Pudlestune	Pudleston
Hethfield	Hatfield	Brocmantune	Brockmanton
Risebiria	Risbury	Forda	Ford (in the Parish of Docklow)
Humbra	Humber		
Gedesferna	Edwin Ralph	Lustuna	Luston
Butterlega	Butterley	Heya	Eye
		Crofta	Croft

Hæc antiqui et autentici viri in præsentia mea attestati sunt, et plurima quæ antiquitus de Parochia Leominstre fuerunt, pro vetustate nimia se tacuisse dixerunt. Nos vero ea quæ superscripta sunt Ecclesiæ Radingiæ et ejus abbati confirmamus." Charter in Dugdale's Monasticon.

say, Reading, Cholsey, and Lempster, which a lay hand has long possessed (quas laica manus diu possedit), and has alienated and divided their lands and possessions; but I, by the advice of my Clergy and other Lieges, for the salvation of my soul, and of King William my Father, and of King William my Brother, and of William my Son, and Queen Maud my Wife, and of all my ancestors and successors, have built a new Monastery at Reading, in honour and name of the Mother of God, and ever Virgin Mary, and of the Blessed John the Evangelist, and have given to the same Monastery Reading itself, and Cholsey, and Lempster, with their appendages, with woods, and fields, and pastures, with meadows and waters, with mills and fisheries, with churches also and chapels, and churchyards, and oblations, and tythes, with money (a mint) and one monier, or coiner, at Reading. The Monks of Reading, their family (household) and effects, shall be free from all gelt and toll, and every other custom, by land or by water, in passing over bridges and seaports throughout England. And the Abbot and his Monks shall have all hundreds and places, with soc, and sac, and tol, and theam, and infangenthef, and utfangenthef, and hamsoken within-borough and without-borough, in ways and paths, and in all places, and all causes which are or may be from their men, and all their possessions, and from aliens forfeiting therein; and the Abbot and Monks of Reading shall, within all their possessions, have the whole cognizance of assaults and thefts, murders, shedding of blood, and breach of the peace, as much as belongs to the royal power, and of all forfeitures. But if the Abbots and Monks shall neglect to take cognizance of these things, the King may require it to be done, provided that he lessen not the liberty of the Church of Reading in any thing. And the men of the manors thereabouts shall come to the Hundred Courts, at Reading and Lempster, according to the custom of former times; and if they shall refuse to come to justice, the King shall receive a forfeiture, and compel them to come, and to give satisfaction. He who by God's favour, should be canonically elected Abbot, must not abuse the alms of the Monastery, by bestowing them upon his secular heirs, followers, or any other persons, but must take care

to entertain the Poor, and Pilgrims, and Strangers. He must not sell the demesnes, nor make Knights, unless in the holy vest of Christ, in which he must take care, modestly, of entertaining children, but prudently to entertain adult and discreet persons, as well Clergy as Laity. To the Monastery of Reading and all belonging to it, I give and confirm this freedom and immunity, which I recommend to the Kings that are to reign after me in England, for God's sake to be kept, that God may keep them for ever. But if anyone shall wittingly infringe, or lessen, or alter the design of this our donation, may the Supreme Judge of all straiten him, and root out him with his posterity, that he may remain without any inheritance, in destruction and famine: but whosoever shall preserve the Monastery of Reading with the liberty and possession aforesaid, may 'the Most High, who reigneth in the kingdom of men,' establish him in all good things, and keep him for ever."

Henry I. gave with no niggard hand. By this Charter he conveyed not only all his possessions in Leominster to the Abbot of Reading, but he bestowed many privileges and immunities. He gave him and his Monks freedom from all gelt (or fine); from tol (of merchandise, on entering Towns); he gave them also the privilege of soc (authority or liberty to minister justice, and to execute laws); of sac (a royalty or privilege which a Lord of a Manor claims to have in his court, of holding plea in causes of debate arising among his tenants and vassals, and of imposing and levying fines touching the same); tol (a liberty to buy and sell within any ones own land); theam (a royalty granted to the Lord of a Manor for the having, restraining, and judging bondmen, and bondwomen, and villains, with their children's goods and chattels, in his court); infangtheof* (a privilege granted to the Lord of a Manor to judge any thief taken within his jurisdiction); utfangtheof (a privilege as used in antient common law, whereby a Lord was enabled to call any man dwelling in his Manor, and taken for

* Infangentheof: from Saxon fang, or fangen; i.e. capere; theof, a thief. Utfangentheof: i.e. ut, or extra; fang, capere; theof, thief. Hamsoken: Saxon, ham, domus; sok, libertas. Tomlin's Law Dictionary, and Ansted MSS. note in Lord Conyngsby's Manuscript.

felony in another place out of his fief, to judgment in his own court); hamsoken (the privilege of freedom which every man has in his own house, and it also signifies the right wherewith the Lord of the Manor takes cognizance of the breach of that immunity.) These privileges secured to the Abbot of Reading full government, and plenary jurisdiction over the Town and community of Leominster, so that all writs for debt or felony, all captures and powers of imprisonment, were exclusively issued and exercised in the name and by the authority of the Lord Abbot of Reading.

The King gave also two other peculiar privileges to the Abbot of Reading: the one was a mint and monyer. This was probably a dangerous privilege, and was the source of much future trouble to the Abbot, for the Monks could not refuse to assist the exigencies of the Crown, and thus were led into debts and difficulties. The other was the power of making Knights. This was the more remarkable as by a provincial council held at Westminster in the early part of his reign, this privilege of Abbots was abolished. The best account of this custom is contained in Dr. Hearne's Antiquarian Discourses, vol. i., p. 82-3. "Abbots made two sorts of Knights; the one superior, the other inferior. Those termed 'Milites' could not be common soldiers, for they were made with many ceremonies, and the greater the ceremony, the greater the honour. Thus Hereward, a nobleman who long contended with William the Conqueror, was knighted by the Abbot of Peterboro; and William Rufus by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. Abbots could not make them 'nisi in sacra veste,' which was their copes, for the adding more to the reputation of the receiver. Malmesbury, in his life of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, relates that about 3 of Henry I. it was by synod established 'Ne abbates faciant milites,' and that this liberty to make Knights was a dispensation granted by Henry I. Other Knights of an inferior order were made by Abbots, who remained in the Monastery, and waited upon the Noblemen who visited the Abbot."

I cannot help recording one other gift of Henry to this favoured foundation, as it is so peculiarly "a sign of the times" in which he lived. "He gave them the hand* of St. James the Apostle, which his daughter Matilda, wife of the Emperor of Germany, had brought from that country with much care and ceremony; and he requires them to pay to it all the honour due to such a relique of such an Apostle." It may be worthy of remark, in further illustration of this matter, that King John, who previous to his ascending the throne was Earl of Moreton, gave command to the Abbot of Tewkesbury to pay to the Monks of Reading, yearly, one mark† of gold, which should be enough to cover the palm of this hand of the Apostle.

Other favours and privileges are wont to flow in to those whom Kings delight to honour; and so Innocent III., the Pope of Rome, not only confirms all the privileges of this royal Charter to the Abbots and Monks of Reading, but adds thereto favours of his own, for he grants this privilege to the Abbot of Reading and his Monastery, that when there shall be a general interdict‡ of the Kingdom, they might celebrate the divine offices, though it shall be with closed doors, with bells silent, with low voice, and with the exclusion of any interdicted or excommunicated persons.

There is one other privilege exercised by the Church of Leominster, which it will be convenient to mention at this time,

* See Lord Lyttleton's History of Henry I., Vol. I., p. 383. Sciatis quod gloriosam manum B. Jacobi Apostoli quam Matilda Imperatrix filia ...ea de Alemannia rediens mihi dedit, ipsius petitione vobis transmitto et in ...erpetuum Ecclesiæ de Radingia dono: quare vobis mando quod eam cum omni veneratione suscipiatis, et tam vos quam posteri vestri quantum honoris et reverentiæ potestis sicut dignum est tantis tanti Apostoli reliquiis jugiter in Ecclesiæ de Radingia exhibere curatis. Dug. Monast.; Matthew Paris, Ed. 1684, p. 79. Manus Sancti Jacobi restituta est Radingiæ.

† Ego Johannes comes Moret. seneschali suo honoris Gloucestriæ, salutem. Præcipio tibi quod facias habere Monachis Raddingiæ singulis annis de redditu meo de Teokbir. unam marcam auri quam eis dedi ad manum S. Jacobi co-operiendam. It is to be observed, that Richard I. in his preparation for the Crusades, had taken off the gold from this hand of St. James.

‡ Cum autem generale interdictum terræ fuerit, liceat vobis, clausis Januis, exclusis excommunicatis et interdictis, non pulsatis campanis, suppressa voce, Divina officia celebrare. Letter of Innocent III., extracted from Lord Conyngsby's MSS. Notes.

and that is the Right of Sanctuary, or of protection to the involuntary homicide, if he sought the Church, and promised to abjure, that is, to leave the Kingdom. This custom belonged of common right, to every church and churchyard for the space of forty days,* and scarcely gave to a church the name of "Sanctuary" till it obtained a Pope's Bull for that purpose. This was a special favour reserved to some of the larger churches. Thus, Westminster, Ripon, Beverley, Durham, were notable examples of the Right of Sanctuary. I do not find any authority for claiming the right of sanctuary in this higher sense for the Church of Leominster. There are several very curious and interesting examples of the exercise of the lower privilege found in the Public Record office. The two following will suffice as specimens.

"Placita de libertate Limenistriæ, tempore Hen: Tertii. Veredicta Burgi de Limenistria de placitis Coronæ. Alanus filius Alūr Bubbe occidit Hugonem filium Hildeburgh. Et fugit in Ecclesiam et abjuravit regnum coram Ballivis Domini Abbatis qui quærunt quicquid Dominus Rex ibi habere potest. Et non habuit catalla. Et Alūr pater suus (de cujus manupastu† fuit) mortuus est. Et duodecim Juratores et etiam milites‡ de forinseco Hundredo dicunt quod nullus Coronator Domini Regis venire debet neque interesse ubi aliquis qui fugerit in Ecclesiam abjuret terram, sed tantum Ballivi Domini Abbatis."

"Adam Molendinarius occidit Willielmum Godewin, et fugit in Ecclesiam et abjuravit Regnum. Non habuit Catalla."

"Alan, son of Alured Bubbe, slew Hugh, the son of Hildeburgh, and fled into the church, and abjured the Kingdom in the presence of the Bailiffs of the Lord Abbot, who enquire what

* 32 Henry VIII, c. xii.—See Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown, p. 336.

† Adam Littleton in his "Syllabus vocabulorum quorundam Forensium, quæ in jure Anglico municipali occurrunt," has "Manupastus 'One of the family.'"

‡ M. Skene de Verbo 'Milites' saith, that in the ancient laws of Scotland, Freeholders were called 'Milites,' which may seeme to have been a custome with us, also by divers places in Bracton who saith that Knights must be on Juries, which turne freeholders do serve." Cowell's Law Dictionary on word 'Knight.'

the Lord the King would have done in the matter. Alan had no chattels. Alured his father, of whose household he was, is dead. And twelve jurymen, and they too, freeholders of the foreign hundred, say, that no Coroner of the King ought to come, or to interfere where any one has fled into the Church, and abjured the Realm, but the Bailiffs of the Lord Abbot only."

"Adam, the Miller, slew William Godwin, and fled into the Church, and abjured the Kingdom. He had no goods."

We thus arrive at the third foundation of the Religious Establishment at Leominster, and find it again turned by this grant of Henry I. from a Nunnery into a Monastery, according to the pattern of its original Institution.

CHAPTER II.—A. D. 1123 TO 1539.

CONTENTS.—The New Monks Benedictines.—The Town at this period.—Visit of Archbishop Baldwin.—Destruction of the Town by William de Breose.—King John at Leominster.—Privilege granted by, to the Priory.—Rebuilding of the Town.—Its Charter of Commerce with Worcester.—Its Wool Trade.—The calamities consequent thereon.—Sequestration of the Priory by Edward I.—Visit of Archbishop Peckham.—Edward I, a Benefactor to the Town.—Two Inhabitants concerned in the Earl of March's Impeachment.—Government of the Town.—Privileges of the Prior.—Opposition of the Townsmen.—Trial of Walter Brut.—Invasion of Owen Glendour.—Liberality of Priory to Henry V.—Description of the Town at this period.—Names of its Streets.—Corrodies granted by the Prior.—Family of Hackluyt.—Battle of Mortimer's Cross.—Henry VII. at Leominster.—Henry VIII dissolves the Priory.—Its last Abbot.—Character and fate of.—Reliques contained in the Priory.—The Holy Maid of Leominster.—Conclusion.

THE Monks to whom Henry I. transferred the Royal Fief of Leominster, were Benedictines. They derived their name from 'St. Benedict' or 'Benet,' their first founder. They were also called 'Cluniacs,' as being revived and restored by Odo, Abbot of Cluni,' in Burgundy, A. D. 913, and 'Black Monks,' because their habits were black. They wore black* serge robes, with a cord round their waists, sandals instead of shoes, and black cowls or hoods, which they could put over their

* For the account of their Robes, see Illustrations in Fosbrooke's Monachism, in the Appendix.—There was a certain typical meaning attached to different parts of the dress of the Monk. The Tonsure signified the Crown of Thorns, and also Humility, and Devotion to the Service of God. The Scapulary, a sleaveless tunic, which sate close to the body, signified Armour against the Devil. The Frock, a long and ample gown with sleeves, mystically signified the Protection of God. Fosbrooke's Monachism, p. 37.

No Benedictine was to call any thing his own, but always to say 'our except in faults, and then 'my.' Fosbrooke, p. 68.

heads, or let fall behind their shoulders at pleasure. They were part engaged in Agricultural and other secular pursuits; and part in attendance on their divine offices, and in keeping the hours appointed by their Ritual. They were compelled to walk, or to travel two and two. The rule of their order was strict.

The Streets through which these Benedictines walked in their sable robes, were not those which now mark our ancient Borough. The upper part of the present Town had at this period no existence. The Town was confined to a limited space, and like all Towns of that date; was for the most part a collection of hovels, and of lowly straw thatched habitations. It occupied the most westernly portion of the present Town. The ancient streets were Vicarage Street, in which was a College for the Vicar or Chaplains who served the neighbouring Churches* in connection with the Monastery; and New Street, which was originally called 'Caerneveh' Street, because it led to the British post of Caerneveh, or Coursneh Hill. The Grange was a fortified entrenchment, defended by a ditch or fosse, which extended down School Lane, Redcow Lane, Battle Bridge, (across South Street, opposite Mr. Manwaring's House), through Mr. Francis Woodhouse's garden, along Dishley Street, by Townsend House to the Pinsley. The Priory lay aloof at a distance from the Town, and must have presented by its lordly front, a strange contrast to the humbler dwellings of the Inhabitants of the Town.

King Stephen was the successor to Henry I., A. D. 1135. He may probably have visited our ancient Town. He resided for some time both at Ludlow and at Hereford, and in this latter place sate crowned during Divine Service in the Cathedral, on Whitsunday, 1138. The disputed succession which troubled his reign, caused throughout the kingdom a general relaxation of authority.

* The Churches of Middleton, Hope, Brimfield, Kimbolton, Lucton, Eyton, Yarpole, besides those of Stoke and Docklow, were all served by the Monks, and the stipends paid to the Priests of each are given in the accounts rendered of the Priory, in the xxxiv year of Henry VIII.

Henry II. and Richard I. are not recorded to have made any visit in person to this portion of their kingdom; but this latter Sovereign, anxious to obtain all the money and treasures he could collect towards his equipment for the holy wars, A.D. 1187, sent Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, to solicit contributions from all the Abbeys and Priories in Wales and the Marches. This progress of the Archbishop was moreover an act of great national importance. It is supposed to have been the first distinct and acknowledged exercise of Ecclesiastical authority by the Primate of England over the Churches of Wales, which at this date finally resigned their claim to independence as the remnant of the Antient British Church, and became subordinate to the See of Canterbury. Giraldus Cambrensis, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, accompanied the Archbishop in this progress. He describes him as being a "man of dark complexion, of an open and venerable countenance, of a moderate stature, of a goodly person, and rather inclined to be thin than corpulent."* Archbishop Baldwin was a mirror of the fashion of the times. More soldier than prelate, he accompanied his lion-hearted Sovereign to Palestine, distinguished himself against the Saladin by his deeds of daring and chivalry, and fell fighting at Acre, where he was interred with all due solemnity. This Archbishop was once received with all becoming pomp and honour within the gates of our ancient Priory.

King John certainly honoured our Town with his presence. The following dates given in Hardy's Itinerary of King John, afford the amplest testimony to this fact.

Anno Regni, 18, 1216.

July 27	Wednesday	Hereford—Hay Castle
" 28	Thursday	Hay Castle
" 29	Friday	Hereford.
" 30	Saturday	Hereford
" 31	Sunday	Hereford—Leominster
Aug. 1	Monday	Leominster
" 2	Tuesday	Radnor—Kingsmead
" 3	Wednesday	Kingsmead—Clun
" 4	Thursday	Shrewsbury

* Hoare's Translation of the Itinerary, Cap. xiv., vol. II., p. 205. Annales Cambriæ, Anno 1187-1191.

This unfortunate Monarch was involved in a bitter and internecine contest with some of the powerful Marcher families, most especially with those of the Lacy's, and of Breose, probably on account of their unwillingness to assist him in his desire to conquer Wales.

In the year 1210, William de Breose in his rage and fury at having been foiled in his attempt on some castles held by John, burnt half the Town of Leominster, and cruelly slew many of the Inhabitants.* Lord de Breose's wife Maude, however, was the main instigator of these severities. She must have been a great contrast to most women, and to what is most admired in women, for according to Camden 'she was a very shrewd, stout, malapert and stomachful woman.' She was at last taken by King John, and died miserably, a prisoner in Windsor Castle.† King John seems to have been mindful of the disasters caused by his rebel subject to the Priory and Town of Leominster, for he increased the privileges of the Monks, and gave them, probably on the occasion of his visit, a confirmation of their Charter granted by his Predecessor Henry I. This new grant by John contained this singular concession.

Item. Nullus Dominicos canes abbatis et Monachorum expaltare cogat. Verum canes hominum quorum intra fforestam manentium abbas et Monachi expaltari faciant. Item. Let none compel the great dogs of the Abbot and Monks to be expeditated, but the Abbot and Monks may compel the dogs of the men living in the forest to be expeditated.‡

* Diverterunt ad quamdam villam *i. e.* Limenistre qua cella est abbatiæ de Reding, de libera elemosyna nostra, et medietatem villæ illius combusserunt. Et de Balistariis, et servientibus nostris ibi inventis, et de alia gentre nostra, populis nostris quosdam interfecerunt, et quosdam vulneraverunt. See Rymer's Fœdera, last edition, vol 1., p. 107.

† Capta tamen uxore Willelmi de Brerosa et Willelmo juniore filio ipsius, qui ducti ad Regem, ex præcepto ejusdem in dolio clauduntur, et sic missi in Angliam in castello de Windesor fame et inedia perierunt. Annales Cambriæ. Anno 1210, p. 66. Some make Corfe Castle the scene of this tragedy.

‡ Expaltare or Expeditare was to cut out the ball of the forefoot of the great dogs, for preservation of the King's game. Any great dog not expeditated or lawed, was liable to a forfeit of 3s. to the King. This Royal exemption was allowed by John to be used by the Abbot and Monks in the woods of

After this destruction by Breose, the Town was speedily rebuilt, but not on its old site. The Inhabitants then commenced that plan and construction of the streets, which by the growth of centuries has expanded into the goodly proportion of the present Town of Leominster. (Blounts M.SS.) A variety of circumstances, the improvement in its habitations consequent on its rebuilding; the activity of an incipient commerce commenced between it and Worcester, and other places; the encouragement even at this date, given by the Crown to all Towns in the hopes of finding in their citizens and traders a support against the tyrannical oligarchy of the Confederated Barons, the privilege of holding fairs and markets, assisted to promote the wealth and importance of the restored Town. The presence of the Monastery was an additional element of prosperity. The Monks in those days were not only the best Agriculturists, but the first Merchants also. Their sacred garb was in some sort a protection, and the many wants of their congregated numbers stimulated an interchange of commodities with their neighbours.

The Monks of Leominster obtained at this very time, 1235, two separate grants and charters, giving a sanction to them as the traders and traffickers of the district. The first was from the Earl of Mellent.

"Waleran, Earl of Mellent, to his Justices, Barons, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, and Officers, and to all his faithful subjects, Frenchmen and Englishmen, from Worcester and Wich (Droitwich), Greeting: I command that the Monks of Reading and of Leominster, their men and all their goods be quit of all toll, and passenger money, and all customary dues."*

Leominster. By an Act of Parliament, 9 Henry III, c. vi. the ball of the foot of mastiffs was not to be cut out, but only the three claws of the forefoot down to the skin. Talis autem fiat Expeditatio per assisam communiter usitatam quod tres cotelli abscindentur sine pelota de pede anteriori.

* Carta Galeranni Comitis Mellent de quietantia Thelonei.

G. comes Mell. justiciariis, et baronibus, vicecomitibus, et præpositis, et ministris, et omnibus fidelibus suis Francis et Anglis de Wircestr, et de *Wiceo*, salutem. Præcipio quod Monachi de Radingia et de Leominstria, et homines, et omnes

The other was a grant of commercial privileges confirmed to the Monks of Leominster by a solemn act of the assembled citizens of Worcester.

"Let all men present and to come know, that we Adam, son of Peter, and Roger of Oxford, Bailiffs of Worcester; Robert Neel, Alured the Draper, John Cumin, Peter Colle, John Francis, Richard Clerk, Robert Goodwill, Alexander the Draper, Albin Francis, Richard Burford, John Price, Richard Cumin, Roger Cumin, Walter Reep, Nicholas Andrew, Geoffrey Peat, William Rokulf, Walter Wigmore, Walter Burewald, John Cradan, Walter Bifle, Alured the Dyer, John Price the younger, Osbert Claud, John Albin, Walter Kuinterell, and all the commons of the City of Worcester, with the assent and consent of the same, do grant for ourselves and our heirs, and by this present charter do confirm to the Abbot of Reading and to the Convent of this House, and to their heirs from which ever province of England they may be, that they have free ingress and egress for ever into our Town of Worcester, and in all our jurisdiction as often as, and whenever they may come; and that they may freely sell and buy every sort of merchandize, (skins, raw hides, raw woollen fleeces, and woollen thread, alone being excepted, Exceptis coriis et pellibus recentibus, et pannis laneis crudis et filo laneo), and that they may freely disembark all their goods, whenever and wheresoever they please, at their own option, below or above the Bohale; and they shall be quit of every sort of toll and demand for passages, stallage, bridges, and every kind of prohibition. We have made this grant on account of the

res eorum sint quieti de theloneo, et passagio, et omni consuetudine. Leominster Chartulary, Cott. MSS., A. III., fol. 106.

This Earl of Mellent was well known in England in the reigns of Stephen and Henry I. This character is recorded of him:—"He was provident and wily, his prudence never failed, his counsels were profound, his wisdom great. His domains lay not only in England, but in Normandy and France; so that he was able, at his will, to promote concord between the Kings of France and England, or to promote wars between them." Henry of Huntingdon. Bohn's Antiq. Library, vol. XI., p. 307.

injustice which we did to the said Abbot and his men, against the liberties of their charter, for which we were summoned to answer before our Lord William of York, the Abbot of Tewkesbury, William de Insula, Ralph of Norwich, Maurice le Butler, Justices of our Lord the King, holding Assizes at Worcester, xix year of Henry III."*

We give this singular and important document at length as it proves that long prior to the existence of any Royal Charter, Leominster, like the other municipal Towns of the middle ages, had an authorized government, which could, in behalf of their respective communes, hold property, exact or remit tolls, exercise rights and privileges, enter into engagements, and do solemn acts binding on their fellow-townsmen. It shows also that in the face of the fierce contests which at this time prevailed between the power of the crown and the grasping oligarchy of the Barons, the germs were sown of that self-reliance, enterprise, and public spirit, which soon caused the influence of the Commons to be felt, and which, in its developement, tended to the freedom and greatness of our people.

The chief impulse of the incipient prosperity of Leominster was the excellency of its wool. This article was the main staple of the trade of the Kingdom during these middle ages. The woolsack was honoured to be made the seat of the Judges of the land, as the emblem of the National greatness. Wool was the subject of numerous Acts of Parliament, passed for the most part to prohibit its exportation. The trade of Leominster in wool is mentioned in several of the existing Royal Charters as having been carried on from a very early period. It was so celebrated as to have a name of its own, "The Leominster Orè." This excellency of its wool gave an impulse to its prosperity, and excited the jealousy of neighbouring Towns, so that on the remonstrance of Hereford and of

* For original grant, see Leominster Chartulary, Cott. MS., A. III., fol. 93.

Worcester, its Market-day was changed by Henry III. from Saturday to Friday.*

The reign of Henry III. had been a series of struggles between himself and his Barons. His Son Edward had been a prisoner at Hereford, and escaped by the assistance of Lord de Mortimer, who secured him a fleet horse, on which he outrode his attendants and escaped to Wigmore Castle. This escape of Edward was fraught with the most important results, and changed, as in a moment, the aspect of affairs. Successful in the important battle of Evesham, (1265), he rescued his Father Henry III, broke in pieces as with a hammer the confederacy of the Barons, caused Llewellyn and the Welsh to retire to their own country, consolidated the influence of the Crown, and prepared the way for those schemes of political wisdom, and for those bold warlike enterprises which rendered his long reign so illustrious an era in English history.

An incident highly illustrative of the condition of these border countries occurred at this period, in the year 1266. Our Town was attacked, plundered, and burnt by some Inhabitants of these Borders. The Appeal† of the Prior to the King for redress is yet extant. He complains of three Leaders, Hugh Syward, John Swayne, and Thomas Thebbaud, who, with their accomplices, taking advantage of the confusion occurring in the Kingdom, arising from the long protracted baronial war, robbed and carried away property of the Prior to the amount of two

* Henry III. (A. D. 1266) gave to the Abbot of Reading a Charter for a Fair to be holden at Reading on the Eve of St. Michael, and to be continued four days. It is uncertain whether the privilege of this Fair was extended to Leominster, as the name of that Town does not occur in the Grant. See the original Grant in the Reading Chartulary, Harleian MS. VIII., fol. 104.

† Prior de Leominstre per attornatum suum obtulit se versus Hugo. Syward, Johannem Swayn, Thomam Thebbaud, et multos alios, de placito quare ipsi et complices sui nuper occasione turbacionis in regno habitæ bona Prioratus sui tam in Villa prædicta quam in aliis maneriis et terris suis partium illarum nec non et hominum suorum ad valentiam duorum millium Libr: ceperunt, asportaverunt, et consumpserunt, et etiam magnam partem villæ prædictæ Leominstriæ incendio devastaverunt, ad dampnum gravissimum ejusdem Prioris et Prioratus sui prædicti. MS. Cotton. Domitian, A. III. folio 62.

thousand pounds, and set fire to a great part of the Town of Leominster, to the very serious loss of the Prior and Priory. The unsettled state of the Kingdom no doubt gave the opportunity for this outrage, and it is not improbable that the increasing wealth and trade of the Town may have afforded the inducement to this bold proceeding.

Edward I. may be reckoned with great probability, to be one of those Monarchs who visited our Town. He was in the immediate neighbourhood on several occasions, and if not a visitor, he was intimately acquainted with its condition and its resources.

In 1273, the second year of his reign, he required the Priory to find him men for his wars.*

In 1276, by his Sovereign Ecclesiastical Prerogative, to prevent the ruin of the Abbey of Reading, he issued patents† of protection and regulation of the expenses of it, and of the Cell of Leominster belonging to it, committing their revenues to certain lay persons to defray the debts thereof.

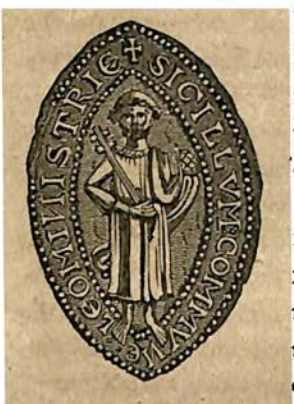
In 1284, he sent Archbishop Peckham on an embassy into these border districts, that he might persuade the Lord Marchers to unite with him in that expedition, which resulted in the subjection of Wales, in the humiliation of the bards, and in that episode generally mentioned in History in which he is popularly related to have presented to the Welsh Chieftains his infant Son, born at Caernarvon, saying that "he would give them a Prince, born in their country, who could not speak a word of English." Archbishop Peckham resided for some time on this occasion within the Priory of Leominster. He had been well acquainted with the Abbot of Reading, having held a Provincial Council within the great hall of that Monastery in 1279; and he appears to have met with a cordial reception within the precincts of its cell. His gratitude to his entertainers was shewn by his erection of the Chapel now standing in

* Edward I. Parliamentary Writs, vol. I., p. 245.

† Prynn's Papal Usurpations, Tom III., p. 177. IV. Edwd. I., 1276. For further account see the Chapter on the History of the Priory.

the Forbury, which he built at his own cost, and dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, (Archbishop Beckett). At this period a handsome gateway formed the entrance to the Priory, the upper part of which was the Frere Chamber, where the business of the Town was transacted till 1750, when the gatehouse fell down. "Quædam Camera quæ vocatur Le Frere Chamber, et quædam Capella eidem Cameræ adjuncta." Blount's MSS. Notes. The Abbot's prison was on the opposite side of this gatehouse.

In 1295, Edward I. summoned two Burgesses from Leominster to attend his Parliament, a privilege which has been retained to the present day. He gave also the Seal* of the Borough, and had previously granted two Fairs, so that we may pay honour to the memory of Edward as the Benefactor of the Town, and the Creator of the Borough of Leominster.



I do not find anything to mention in connection with our Town during the reign of Edward II., except it be the testimony afforded in the course of it to the exceeding elevation and influence of one of the great border families, who had adherents in this place. As Roger de Mortimer was the chief instrument in securing the throne to Edward I., so was his Son, who first assumed the title, "Earl of March," equally concerned in dethroning Edward II. "He executed the office of Prime Minister, and managed the affairs of the Kingdom at his

* The Author has received the following letter from the present Town Clerk of the Borough, on this subject:—

February 1st, 1860.

Dear Sir,—Touching the Seal. In a letter which I received a few years ago, from Mr. Doubleday, of the British Museum, he said, "It is much earlier than the reign of Queen Mary. I find the Town of Leominster sent Members to Parliament in the twenty-third of Edward I., which is about the date of the Seal."

Yours faithfully,
THOMAS SALE.

pleasure."* On his impeachment at the accession of Edward III., among the persons named in the Writs and process against the adherents of Roger de Mortimer are· Willielmus de Staunton of Leominster, and Richard Showne of Leominster.†

The long reign of Edward III., A.D. 1327-1377, greatly consolidated the Kingdom. The Sovereign engaged in the intricacies of foreign politics, rather than, like most of his predecessors, in the repression of petty border warfare; no longer came into such frequent personal contact with this particular district. Edward III, however, in the twelfth year of his reign, renewed to the Abbey of Reading the privilege of the Mint, borrowed Jewels to the amount of £224 9s., a considerable quantity of plate, and £100 in money, and granted to the Abbots and Monks, a renewal of their Charter, and a full recognition of their privileges. And here it will not be an uninteresting, nor an altogether unnecessary enquiry to ascertain what these privileges of the Monks were, and to learn what was the mode of government established in the Town during this flourishing period of its monastic rule. The election of two Burgesses to Parliament, and the establishment of two fairs, the distinctions conferred by Edward I., necessarily implied the existence of some Corporate or Municipal authority in the Borough, to conduct the elections, to authenticate the Return of the writs, to collect the various dues and stallages, and to maintain peace and good order. These favours, however, it is to be distinctly remarked, did not create anew, or for the first time, these Municipal Authorities, but only conferred new and additional rights and powers upon a governing Body already in existence. Thus, the Charter of King James truly asserts that the Borough of Leominster was an ancient Borough, and had immemorially enjoyed certain customs, liberties, franchises, and acquittances. These privileges and this authority, from the period of the commencement of the Priory, under the Charter of Henry I. to the time of its attainder under

* Rapin, vol. I., p. 406.

† See Parliamentary Writs, vol. II, div. 1. Chron. Abstract, p. 374-375.

Henry VIII., were solely and exclusively exercised by the Prior, acting as the Representative or Deputy of the Abbot of Reading. He alone appointed, through these four centuries, the Bailiffs and Municipal Officers, who were sworn, on their admission into office, in the following oath :—

"Fyrst. Ye shall bere feyth and fidelite to the Abbott of Redyng, and to hys officers and kepars of the Prioury or Maneur of Leominster, and to their successors next, after your allegiance, duryng the tyme ye shall occupye offyse undre them.

Item. Ye shall be no detractour, evyle speker, or hurter of them, either in their name or goods, nor yet to be of counseill with eny other in suche purpose, but upone knowledge to you thereof, ye shall wt convenyent hast disclose and shew yt unto theym, or to any of theym.

Item. Ye shall be no wtdrawer or keper to your own yse eny exchete, ryght, or casueltie that by vertue of Kyng's Charter myght growe unto them in your office duryng youre tyme in the same.

Item. Ye shall indifferently execute all maner attachements, leveys, and other precepts of the Courts within the seyde Borough and Liberte, without sparyng oon to hurt another during your office. So help you God, and halydome, and by thys booke."

These Bailiffs thus sworn had the exclusive right to issue or to act on any writ, warrant, or forfeiture; or to undertake any legal proceeding, civil or criminal, within the Liberty of Leominster. Several of these writs are extant in the Public Record Office, and are thus endorsed, "Istud Breve returnatum fuit Ballivis villæ Leominstrie, qui habent returnum omnium Brevium, et Williel-mus de Gossynton Ballivus dictæ Libertatis sic respondet." This writ is returned by the Bailiffs of the Borough of Leominster, who have the return of all writs, and William Gossynton, Bailiff of the said liberty, thus replies.

These privileges of an exclusive authority within the Town are distinctly secured to the Abbot and his Master Keeper by the grants, and confirmations of grants, by many successive Kings.

Take for example these extracts from a confirmation grant of Edward III.: "But because the said Liberties in those Charters were not specified by express words, the aforesaid Abbot and Monks and their predecessors, upon allowing the same liberties, have been often troubled and disturbed in the Courts of us and our said progenitors. We being willing to provide for the security of the said Abbot and Monks, and their successors in the matter, that they may the more quietly apply themselves to divine service, and more devoutly serve the Lord, have granted for us and our heirs, and by this our Charter confirmed to the said Abbot and Monks, that they and their successors for ever have the Returns of all the Writs of us and our heirs, and of Summonses from our Exchequer, and the Exchequer of our heirs, and attachments, as well concerning pleas of the Crown as any others whatever, within the Liberty of Reading above said, so as that no Sheriff nor other Bailiff, or Ministers of us or our heirs, enter that Liberty to execute the said writs and summonses or Attachments about pleas of the Crown or others aforesaid, or any other office there, unless in defect of the said Abbot and Monks, and their successors, and their Bailiffs, and Ministers there."*

These Bailiffs were very different persons to those who, under the latter Charter, were annually elected to preside over the Corporation. They held their office for life, and were the Deputies (durante placito) of the Priors, the presiding officers in their Courts, and under them the municipal governors of the Town. John Pyrington held the office of Bailiff for twenty to twenty-five years, under two Sovereigns — Edward III. and Richard II.

The Abbot or Prior had his own prison. Of this there is sufficient evidence. Simon de Brugge, the High Sheriff of the County, received a writ commanding him to bring into court the body of a William de Goodegramme, a man of Leominster, on the suit of a Mercer in London, for a debt of fifty pounds. Simon de Brugge makes this answer to the writ: "I have caused the

* Confirmation Grant, in Lord Conyngsby's MSS.

return of this writ to be made by John Pyrington, Bailiff of the Liberty of the Abbot of Reading, who has the return of all writs, and the execution of the same," who makes this answer: "I have taken the body of the within-named William Goodegramme, whose body is detained in the prison of the said Abbot at Leominster, and enquiry has been made as to the ascertaining and valuing the chattels of the said William, as appears in the statement attached to this writ." ["Responsio Simonis de Brugg, Vicecomitis. Returnum ipsius Brevis habere feci Johanni Pyrington, Ballivo Libertatis Abbatis Reding de Leominstria, qui habet returnum omnium Brevium et executiones eorundem. Qui mihi sic respondit. Cepi Corpus Willielmi Goodegramme infra nominati, cujus Corpus retentum est in prisona dicti Abbatis apud Leominstre. Et quo ad extendendum et appreciandum Terras et Catella dicti Willielmi executio facta est, prout patet in quadam Inquisitione huic Brevi consuta."]

William Goodegramme was found on the oath of twelve Inhabitants to have no lands, but to have chattels to the value of eleven pounds, which were seized for the King.

The Abbot had his own Court,* in which causes relating to property were heard, agreements made, fines imposed and levied, and which exercised an exclusive judiciary jurisdiction. Many instances of causes pleaded in this court are yet extant in the Record Office, and authenticated transcripts are found in the Conyngsby Collection of M.SS. in connection with Leominster.

It appears then, the Liberty of Leominster was a "Peculiar," in which a supremacy attached to the Prior, as the Representative of the Abbot of Reading, that all civil authority was exercised in his name, and that he was possessed of a paramount palatinate jurisdiction over the Municipal officers, who were appointed by his sanction, and were responsible to him for the due discharge of their duties.

This plenary authority of the Prior in the Town was not exercised at all times without opposition or resistance. In the

* The Justices Itinerant sate in the Abbot's own Court, and his Seneschall, or Bailiff, sate with them, as appears by a precept of Henry VI. Dugdale's Monasticon.

Record Office there are yet to be found the pleadings of a singular trial, which arose in the seventeenth year of Richard, II., 1394, to resist and cast off this authority. The whole trial is recorded. The accusation is from one Walter Brut, against the Prior of Leominster, and his Servants, and his Constables; and at first sight appears a very serious charge. They are asserted to have lain in wait for the said Walter Brut, at Postel Bridge,* in Leominster, to have shot at him, and smote him, and to have wounded him with five arrows, and to have left him for dead. The plea put in as answer explains the matter most satisfactorily. Although a lengthy document it is worthy of insertion, as giving a curious illustration of the times, and as testifying by the most authentic evidence the favourable feeling existing among the Inhabitants of the Town towards the Monks and the Monastery. "The aforesaid do say, That Walter Brut unjustly accuses them: for they say that the aforesaid Abbot is Lord of the Town of Lempster, and that the same Abbot and all his predecessors, Abbots of the place aforesaid, have had from time immemorial, all the royalty and whatever belongs to the King's Majesty in that Town, and ought there to make Stewards, Bailiffs, and Constables, and several other officers, for preserving the Royalty and peace of our Lord the King in the same Town. And they say that the aforesaid Walter, with a great many malefactors, gathered unto him for a quarter of a year before Walter Brute aforesaid alleges he was maimed, at sundry times made sundry affrays within the Town aforesaid against the peace of our Lord the King: and they say that on Monday next before the Friday aforesaid, on which the aforesaid alleges he was maimed, certain servants of Hugh Maune and companions of the aforesaid Walter, assaulted one Walter Lyulf by force of arms, that is to say, with swords, shields, bows and arrows, at Leominster aforesaid, and beat and

* There never was a bridge of this name in Leominster. The word "Postel" was probably written "Spittel" in the original document, and was corrupted into "Postel" by an error of the copyist. The account of this trial is found in the Collection of the Conyngsby's MSS.

maimed him; upon which the aforesaid Walter Lyulf complained, and Thomas Walker, John Griffiths, John Coke, (Servant of the said Hugh Maune), Walter de la Wode, of Bodenham, John Geffreys, and other Malefactors, armed with coats of mail, plates, pallets, swords, bucklers, polaxes, launcegayes, and bows bent, and arrows drawn in the same bows, came to Lempster aforesaid to an affray of the peace; and therefore, the aforesaid Hugh Hakeluyt and John Hunteley, Constables of our Lord the King, desired the aforesaid John Hakeluyt, John Squell, William Squell, John Cook, (the South-Dene's Servant), Walter Smith, William Tylere, Richard Aylwyn, John Hunt, Walter Sertery, John Pert, and Richard Hunteley, to come with them to their assistance to arrest the aforesaid Walter Brut, Hugh Maune, and other Malefactors aforesaid, their adherents to find security of the peace: and when the aforesaid John Hakeluyt, John Squell, William Squell, John Cook, (the South-Dene's* Servant), Walter Smith, William Tylere, Richard Aylwyn, John Hunt, Walter Sertery, John Pert, and Richard Hunteley, had come towards the aforesaid Walter Brut, Hugh Maune, and other the aforesaid Malefactors, to arrest them, the said Walter Brute and the other Malefactors aforesaid, knowing the cause of the coming of the aforesaid Constables, and of the other persons aforesaid that came to assist them, shot at them, and instantly killed Thomas Awbrey and John Cook, of the County of Berks, who came to the assistance of the Constables aforesaid; and the aforesaid Hugh Hakeluyt and John Hunteley, Constables, &c., and the aforesaid John Hakeluyt, John Squell, William Squell, John Cook, (the South-Dene's Servant), Walter Smyth, William Tylere, Richard Aylwyn, John Hunt, Walter Sertery, John Pert, and Richard Hunteley, advanced with a strong arm unto them to arrest them, as they were ordered by the Steward aforesaid, and arrested them; and thus they say that this mischief which the aforesaid Walter Brut received there, was

* South-dene, *i. e.*, Sub-dean.

upon making the arrest aforesaid, and they demand judgment if the aforesaid Walter Brut ought to maintain his appeal aforesaid against them in this case, &c."

It was ordered, as the result of the trial, that "the aforesaid Abbot, and all the rest, may go thence without a day, and that the aforesaid Walter Brut be taken."

This curious trial has a deeper meaning than the mere testimony it supplies to the fact of the authority of the Prior being distasteful to some of the Inhabitants. It affords an apt and true illustration of the condition of the County itself. The County of Hereford was, at this time, peculiarly devoted to the new opinions of Wycliffe. There was a public remonstrance presented to the Bishop respecting "the misbelief of very many Lollards, who have, too long a time, sprung up here in your diocese."*

* Fox, the great English Martyrologist devotes many pages to the history of this Walter Brut. He gives a full narrative of his solemn trial before the Bishop of Hereford, which occurred in 1393, the year preceding his misconduct in the Town of Leominster. We will give a few extracts from Fox's narrative. "In the name of God, Amen:—To all manner of faithful Christian people, that shall hear and see this our present process, John, by the sufferance of God, Bishop of Hereford, sendeth greeting, and continual charity in the Lord. —We would that you all should know, that of late by many faithful Christian people, and specially zealous followers of the Catholic faith, it was lamentably done us to understand, by way of complaint, that a certain son of ours going out of kind, named Walter Brute, a lay person, learned, of our Diocese, hath under a cloaked shew of holiness, damnably seduced the people and setting behind him the fear of God, doth seduce them as much as he can from day to day, informing and teaching openly and privily as well the nobles as the commons, in certain conclusions heretical, schismatical, and erroneous, and also heretofore condemned: and they have also exhibited against the same Walter, the articles under written ..... After all the aforesaid things were exhibited and given by the aforesaid Walter Brute, unto the said Bishop of Hereford, he further appointed to the same Walter the third day of the month of October, at Hereford, which third day now at hand, being Friday, A. D. 1393, the said Walter Brute appeared before him, sitting in commission in the Cathedral Church of Hereford, at six o'clock or thereabouts, having for his assistants in the same place, divers Prelates and Abbots, and twenty Bachelors of Divinity, whereof twelve were Monks, and two Doctors of Law. The same Walter submitted himself to the determination of the Church, and to the correction of John the said Bishop, as it appeareth word for word in a scroll written in the English tongue: the tenor of which scroll

This Walter Brut was a notorious Lollard; and in his zeal for these new doctrines, he became a disturber of the public peace, and gathered to himself a rabble of ignorant and excited followers, who were guilty of deeds of violence, and moved about from place to place, and endeavoured to force on the people the acceptance of the opinions he had espoused. Leominster was not the only place which he attacked. There is extant a letter from the King, in which mention is made of this said Walter Brut "causing a disturbance in diverse places within the diocese of Hereford, and parts thereunto adjoining." Hence, we arrive at the real object of this conduct of Walter Brut. He took advantage, probably, of a partial disaffection, which was counteracted by the zeal, and devotion, and allegiance of the most respectable and influential portion of the Town's-people. His real object was to show the animosity of himself and his partizans to a Town which was the seat of an eminent Ecclesiastical Foundation, and to induce its Inhabitants to join him in his advocacy of the new sentiments of the Lollards.

The general favour with which the opinions of Wycliffe were received on this Borde helped forward another great event of

is as follows, 'I, Walter Brute, submit myself principally to the Evangelcy of Jesus Christ, and to the determination of holy writ, and to the general council of holy writ, and to the sentence and determination of the four doctors of holy writ, that is Augustine, Ambrose, Jeromy, and Gregory. And I submit me to your correction, as a subject ought to his Bishop.' This scroll, as before is recited, in the English tongue, the aforesaid Walter Brute read with a loud and intelligible voice at the cross in the Cathedral churchyard, on Monday, the sixth of October, before the sermon made unto the people, in the presence of the said Bishop of Hereford, and others above written, as also other Barons, Knights, Noblemen, and Clergy. What after this became of this Walter Brute or what he had, I find it not registered; but like it is that he for this time escaped." Walter Brute was a Welshman. He began one of his explications, put in at his trial, in these words: "I, Walter Brut, sinner, layman, husbandman, and a christian; having my offspring both of my father's and mother's side of the Britons, &c." It is to be remarked that this name is spelt in several ways, Brut, Brute, or Brutte. The real name was probably Bright,—not an uncommon one in our border. Fox's Acts and Monuments, Anno 1393.

those times, the last successful invasion of England by the Welsh. The Inhabitants of Wales seemed, during the previous century, to have become reconciled to their English Rulers. They served abroad with much credit to themselves, and with apparent good will in the armies of Edward III., and it was chiefly a strong prevailing religious sentiment, hostile to Henry IV., who now unexpectedly acceded to the throne, that caused them at this time to confederate, to rebel, and to invade England. Owen Glendowr was the suddenly raised Leader of their mighty host. Many powerful motives combined to influence that Chieftain on this occasion. His strong personal attachment to the lately deposed Richard II., his acceptance of the doctrines of Wycliffe, his dissatisfaction with the usurpation of Henry IV., (whose accession was brought about by the Clergy attached to the See of Rome, and delayed the Reformation for more than a hundred years), his personal wrongs, his reputed lineage, by a maternal descent from the antient Princes of Wales, his influence in Herefordshire, by the marriage of his daughters into the families of Monington, Crofts, and Scudamore, these circumstances all united to induce Glendowr to avail himself of the discontent and disorganization attendant on a change of dynasty, and to head his impetuous countrymen in this, their last invasion of England. The success of this attempt was so great and unexpected that the common people attributed it to the use, by Glendowr, of spells and conjurations.* The English soldiers, on the occurrence of

* Hollingshed not only attributes a pestilence to the year of Glendowr's birth, but states that his father's horses were found on the night of his birth standing up to their bellies in blood; ominous of his son's cruelty, no doubt, and of the slaughter he should commit. Shakespeare gives currency to the popular idea; and makes Glendowr thus speak of himself.

> Give me leave
> To tell you once again,—that at my birth
> The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes;
> The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
> Were strangely clamorous to the frighted fields,
> These signs have mark'd me extraordinary;
> And all the courses of my life do show
> I am not in the roll of common men. Henry IV., Act III., Sc. 1.

unusual storms and rains, shared also this opinion. Sir Edward Mortimer,* the English General, after an heroic personal encounter, was defeated, and is reported to have been confined for some weeks as a prisoner in the Abbot's dungeon at Leominster. Glendowr himself is also said to have resided, after this victory over Mortimer, for some time in our Town, and to have exacted large tribute from the Prior and Monks. There is not, however, sufficient external evidence to confirm the local tradition.

Henry V. (A.D. 1418) received liberal supplies and rich gifts of great and precious jewels "from the Monks of Reading and of Leominster," in his wars against France, for which he returned public acknowledgment in the presence of his Parliament.†

At the period of this munificent loan to Henry V., in the early part of the fifteenth century, the Priory of Leominster had reached its highest point of splendour and magnificence. Approached by its handsome gateway, encircled with its Forbury, or outer Court, with its gardens, orchards, mills,

* This Sir Edward Mortimer was an object of suspicion to his Sovereign, Henry IV. He was the Uncle of the young Earl of March, who had both a better parliamentary, and a better hereditary title to the throne, than Henry. Henry IV. derived his title through John, fourth son of Edward III. The Earl of March derived his through Lionel, the third son. Parliament too, had acknowledged the young Earl as the Presumptive Heir to the late King, Richard II. This suspicion of Henry is rebutted by the zealous friendship of Hotspur, in a scene familiar to all readers of Shakespeare.

> Revolted Mortimer!
> He never did fall off, my Sovereign liege,
> But by the chance of war;—To prove that true
> Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,
> Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took,
> When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
> In single opposition, hand to hand,
> He did confound the best part of an hour
> In changing hardiment with great Glendowr.
> King. Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him:
> He never did encounter with Glendowr:
> I tell thee, he durst as well have met the devil alone,
> As Owen Glendowr for an enemy.
>
> Henry IV., Act I., Scene 2.

† Rolls of Patents, 4 Henry V.

fishponds, and bowling green; watered by its several proximate streams, it must have appeared to the eye of every way-worn pilgrim a pleasant habitation. The streets of the Town, were known, for the most part, by the same names as they now are called by. A list of Benefactors to the Lady's Chapel, *i. e.*, to a Chauntrey called "Our Lady's Chauntrey, within the Parish Church, of the date of the sixteenth year of Richard II., 1393, mentions the possession of rents and burgages in these streets: "In alto vico"—High Street, "In novo vico"—New Street, "In vico versus Diliga"—Dishley Street, "In vico versus sanctum Andream"—St. Andrew Street,* *i. e.*, the present Church Street, as this street led to the Chapel of St. Andrew. "In vico versus Mariscum"—The Marsh, "In

* At this date (A.D. 1393) a greater part of the present Church Street had no existence. There was no house of any kind in the Forbury. The street leading from the Market Cross to the Forbury Gate was called St. Andrew Street; and for this reason, that it led to the Chapel of St. Andrew, or St. Anthony. The difficult question now to solve is, where was the site of this Chapel? The Author was induced at first, on the evidence of an old Terrier of the Vicarage, to think that the Chapel stood in the meadow immediately on the right after passing the railway crossing at the Poplands. The words of the Terrier are these: "A Terrier of all and singular the Glebe Lands, Houses, and portion of Tythes, belonging to the Vicarage of Leominster, in the Diocese of Hereford, made the Sixteenth day of March, Anno Domini, 1685. Michaell Stephens, Vicar, Henry Brown and John Wilkes, Churchwardens.

Item—One Churchyard, or Burial Place, wherein the Parish Church of Leominster now standeth.

Item—One Pasture, or Meadow, called or known by the name of St. Anthonies, or St. Andrew's Churchyard, lying within the Parish of Leominster aforesaid, near unto a certain place called the Poplands, having on the east side thereof a River called Ridgmoore, and the King's highway on the south part thereof.

Item—One Churchyard, wherein the Parish Chapel of Docklow now standeth.

Item—One other Churchyard, wherein the Parish Chapel of Stoke now standeth."

This Terrier does not say, as in the three other instances, that St. Anthonies Churchyard included within it the Chapel, and this change of expression is of much significance. The tradition, too, of a spot having been once actually

vico versus Eton"—*i. e.*, Eton-ham, or Etnam Street, "In vico versus Hereford"—South Street, "In vico versus Crowford"—*i. e.*, Vicarage Street, leading to Crowford's, or Croward's Mill. In Burgess Lane, Crane's Lane, Mappenor Lane, and Pynnefurdling Lane, which I note, (says Mr. Blount in his MS. Notes), the rather to shew the antiquity,

used for sepulture is seldom lost. There is however, no vestige of a tradition of the Poplands Meadow, St. Andrew's, or St. Anthonies gath, ever have been used for burial.

There are other references, at a later date, to this same Chapel of St. Anthony's, or St. Andrew, which may help to decide the question. The following items appear in the Parish Churchwarden's accounts in these respective years:—

1608. Item—Paid to the said Bottley for making up the wall of St. Anthony's Chapel, vjd.

1613. Item—Paid to John Exley, for boords to mend St. Anthony's door, and the door at the littel bell, xd.

1617. Item—Paid for mending the locke of St. Anthoney's door, iijd.

These entries shew that the Churchwardens had the care, custody, and reparation of St. Anthony's, or St. Andrew's Chapel, and lead to the inference that it was an integral part of the Parish Church, as beyond it they would have no jurisdiction. We have undoubted authority for saying that the Parish Church contained in it three Chauntries of the Holy Trinity, of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of our Lady of Pity. That it also contained the Chapel of St. Ann, (see Will quoted below.) The evidence, therefore, as far as we can now trace it, is in favour of the Chapel of St. Andrew having been an integral portion of the Parish Church. It was probably near to the South Porch and the Sancte Bell; and thence, being the first approached on access to the Church, would antiently give the name to the street leading to the Church.

The Terrier above quoted contains also the following items:—

Item—One dwelling house, and two crofts of arable land, lying and being in the Parish of Hope under Dinmore, in the said Diocese of Hereford, containing two acres and a half, or thereabouts, be it more or less, lying and being near unto the Church of Hope aforesaid.

Item—The Easter Book of the Parishes of Leominster, Stoake, and Docklow aforesaid.

Item—The Tythe Fruit and Eggs of the said Parishes of Leominster, Stoake, and Docklow, and the Tythe Eggs of the Parish of Hope aforesaid.

Item—The Tythe Pigs and Geese, of the Town of Leominster only.

Item—Sixty Strike of Wheat, or thereabouts, paid from the Parishes of Stonke and Docklow every year.

There is another Terrier, dated A.D. 1630, exactly correspondent to the one quoted.

and in many instances the changes in the names of those streets and lands. The Town itself was at this time in a flourishing state. "It was," (according to Leland), "meetly large, and good buildings of timbre." Several families of repute were at this time established in the Town. I find, (says Blount), the name of Sturmey, Mappynor, Lorymoor, and Romaine; and now no memory left of them, save some lands called after them. There was also a family of the Bradfords, who had a mansion house at the south end of the Town, and that continued long there.*

The Prior lived on good terms with these Inhabitants, and enriched his own house by establishing a system of Corrodies† or Grants for life, on the receipt of certain sums of money, of the privileges of board and lodging, at the cost and charges of the Priory. The purchaser of the corrody became a lay member of the house, and obtained not only a place at the Monks' table, but also (and in this consisted its chief value) a share of the merits of the Monks' prayers, and actions. Of these corrodies the following may serve as an example.

"Know all men by these presents, that we, Thomas, by divine permission Abbot of Reading, to our beloved in Christ,

* Mr. Blount gives the last Will and Testament of a member of this family. "In Dei Nomine, Amen. 7 Maii Anno, 1458. Ego Philippus Bradford de Leomynster sanæ mentis, et æger in corpore, condo testamentum meum in hunc modum. Imprimis, lego animam meam Deo Omnipotenti Creatori meo, et beatæ Mariæ, et omnibus Sanctis, corpusque meum ad sepeliendum in Capella sanctæ Annæ infra Ecclesiam Parochialem Leomynstriæ. Item, lego Altari S. Petri in Ecclesia Monachorum ijs. Item, lego Altari Sanctæ Trinitatis in Ecclesia parochiali ibidem xijd. Item, lego Johanni Viro Vic. ibidem ad orandum pro me vjs. viijd. Item volo quod sex pauperes habeant duodecim ulnas panni lanei nigri coloris, ad tenendum sex cereos circa corpus meum in die sepulturæ meæ. Item volo quod corpus meum sit coopertum cum nigro panno laneo die sepulture meæ.

† Corody,—Corodium,—signifies a sum of money, or an allowance of meat, drink, and clothing, due to the King from an Abbey, or other House of Religion, whereof he was the founder, towards the sustentation of such an one of his servants, as he should think fit to bestow it upon. A corrody may be also due to a common person, by grant from one to another. Jacob's Law Dictionary.

John Mawne, of Asscheton, Esq., for the service he has done us and what he shall hereafter do, we grant him maintenance in victuals and drink for his life in our Priory of Leominster; viz., while the said John is well, and in the hall there, he shall be served at dinner and supper as the fellow Monks are, except on flesh days in Advent, Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima, on which days he shall be served as the other Esquires are. And if he be sick or absent for any reasonable cause, he shall have the same maintenance in his chamber within our manor; and he shall receive yearly, during his life, one robe of the suit of our Esquires, and four loads of fuel, in our said manor, a chamber which William Mason, Chaplain, inhabited, and a stable in the angle, or corner next the stable pole, for one horse, to be kept with hay only. And we further grant to the said John, that whilst he dwells in the Town of Leominster, or elsewhere without the bounds of the said manor, he shall receive every day two white loaves and one prykked loaf, one flaggon and a half of the best ale, one mess and a half of flesh or fish, according to the day; provided on those days that he is in the hall he shall not also receive the same allowance. And the said John shall always be our faithful friend to us and to our monastery as he hath faithfully promised. In witness whereunto we have put our common seal. Given in our Chapter of Radyng the first day of August, on the feast of St. Peter, in Vinculis."*

There is one family omitted in Blount's list which was intimately connected with, and did much honour to, the Town of Leominster at this period, and that is the family of the Hackluyt's. The ancestors of this family are found on the Rolls of the Sheriffs of Herefordshire, in the time of Edward I. They lived for upwards of two centuries at Eaton Hall, within a mile of the Parish Church, and were intimately connected

* This accumulation of guests must have required a large household, and a numerous retinue of servants and officials. Price gives this schedule as the

with our Town during that long period. We have lately read the account of one of that family distinguishing himself amongst his Townsmen in the cause of civil order and of legitimate authority; and this antient house thus fertile in patriots at home, was no less illustrious in providing heroes for the wars. Its representative, Sir Leonard Hackluyt, was present in the hard won fight of Agincourt, and is recorded by his bravery and prowess to have contributed to that famous victory. "He had," says Leland, "one St. George, a nobleman of France, to his prisoner." From this family descended Richard Hackluyt, Prebendary of Westminster, the celebrated Narrator of Voyages in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Leominster cannot boast many families of distinction immediately connected with the Town. The more care should be taken to pay due honour to those whom it can legitimately claim. In this spirit the writer of this history, when most unexpectedly called upon at a public meeting, in November, 1858, to give a name to a Court of the Order of Foresters, then to be established in the Borough, asked leave to call it "The Royal Hackluyt Court, at Leominster."

roll of the servants employed in the Priory, and of the wages paid them in 1408.—9 Henry IV. Price's History, p. 262.

Licutenant, or Deputy	2s.	Keeper of the Sub-dean's Palfrey	1s.
Dean of the Chambers	2s.	Dean's Servant	6d.
Clerk	2s.	Sub-dean's Servant	6d.
Pantarer	2s.	Gardener	1s.
Taylor, or Groom of the Wardrobe	2s.	Miller	6d.
Porter	2s.	Laundress	3d.
Porter's Servant	1s.	Scullion	3d.
Hostler	1s.	Sexton's Boy	3d.
Butler, or Manciple	1s.	Huntsman	1s.
Second Butler	6d.	Under Tyler	3s. 4d.
Third Butler	6d.	Maltman	6d.
Baker	1s.	Lieutenant's Boy	3d.
Second Baker	6d.	The Boy that washes the Monk's Vestments	3d.
Third Baker	6d.		
First Smith	3s. 4d.	The sum total	£1 13 5
Second Smith	1s. 6d.		
Keeper of the Dean's Palfrey	1s.		

And so much each of them at the Feast of Easter.

The unhappy reign of Henry VI. (A.D. 1423-1460) was remarkable for the sanguinary contests of the rival houses of York and Lancaster. One important battle in the series was fought near this Town, on the plain between Kingsland and Shobdon, February 2nd, Candlemas Day, 1460.* The combat lasted, with various alternations of success, from sunrise to sunset. Lord Pembroke, the King's General, was at last routed. The victory declared itself in favour of the Earl of March; and thus the battle of Mortimer's Cross completed the gradually accumulative honours of the great border family of March, by encircling the brow of its Chief with the garland of the crown. Edward IV. ever shewed himself favourable to this border district, and held his Court, for some years, at Ludlow.

Henry VII. (A.D. 1485) was the last Sovereign who visited Leominster in this period of our history. He passed through this Town on his route from Milford Haven to his triumph on Bosworth Field; and in close proximity to this Town he obtained the omen of his approaching success. A prophecy had announced, that whichever should shoot an arrow first should have the victory. This, most understood, that the archer in the fight which should first let loose the bolt, should gain the day to his side. But Henry, passing over the river Arrow, a little below the Town of Leominster, pointed out to his soldiers that "he had shot the Arrow first," and claimed for himself, as the event justified, the fulfilment of the prediction.†

We now approach the termination of this second portion of our history.

* All historians relate that at the commencement of this battle, three separate suns were seen in the heavens. Edward IV. from this circumstance assumed the sun triple in full brightness as his heraldic cognizance. Owen Tudor, and other notable persons were taken; some of whom are said to have been executed at the Iron Cross, in Leominster.

† "Arrow, from British word 'Aarwy,' which signifies a stream that rapidly overflows: a feature truly characteristic of this river." Williams' History of Leominster, p. 6. Fuller's Church History, Book iv., p. 13.

In the year 1539, the antient Monastery of Reading, with its scarcely less famous Cell of Leominster, with all their rich endowments, was dissolved by attainder, in the thirty-first year of Henry VIII.* It is not my business either to defend or to impugn the policy of those times, when "private greediness eadged by Churchmen did grind the Church, and withdrew much from God, wherewith christian pietie had formerly honoured God."† I desire only to give, as briefly as possible, a narrative of facts.

Hugh Cook was the last Abbot of Reading, and John Glover was the last Prior of Leominster. They were both men who bent to the storm, and did what they could to conciliate, rather than, to resist. Hall, in his Chronicle, says that "Hugh Cooke was a stubborn Monk, absolutely without learning." This account is contradicted by those who must have known, and who had no motive in concealing or in misrepresenting the truth. Dr. John London, the Visitor to the Monastery appointed by the Crown, writes of him to Lord Cromwell, "He desyreth only yr favour, and no other thing; and I know so much that my Lord shall find him as conformable a man as any in thys realme, as more at large I will shew you at the begynning of the term, by the grace of Godd." The same Visitor writes on another occasion, "I have requyred of my Lord Abbot the relycks of thys house, which he schewyd unto me wt gudd will. I have taken an inventory of them, and have lokkyd them upp behynd the high aulter, and have the key in my keping, and they be always redy at your Lordeschip's commaundment. They have a gudde lecture in scripture daily redde in their Chapiter House, bothe in Englisch and Laten, to the wiche is gudde resort, and the Abbot ys at yt hymself."

The concessions and conformableness of Cooke to the King's wishes availed him not. He was hung before the gates of his

* For the value, and other circumstances of the Priory, at this time, see the History of the Priory in the latter portion of this work.

† Camden's Britannia, p. 471, folio ed.

own Monastery, not for treason, or Leze Majestie, but under the Six Articles Act, as it was called,—a measure suited to the tyrannical nature of the bigot King, and under which he caused Papist and Protestant to be carried on the same hurdle to execution! Let us drop a tear over the fate of the last Lord Abbot that bare sway in our Town. Let us hope that by the grace of God he found the "gudde lecture in scripture, daily rede in his Chapiter House" to have been to him "the engrafted word, able to save the soul."

The Priory of Leominster was not wanting in those tricks and superstitious practices which so much kindled the desire for, and promoted the growth of, the Reformation. Swinfield Bishop of Hereford, (A.D. 1130), has left a testimony to the multitude, and to the sanctity of its reliques.* "We have known," (he says), "and have learnt by certain proofs, that the said Church is

* The Inventorye off the Relyques off the House off Redyng.
Imprimis. Twoo peces off the Holye crosse
Item. Saynt James hande
Item. Saynt Phelype scolle (scull)
Item. A bone off Marye Magdalene, wth other more
Item. Saynt Anastasiais hand, with other more
Item. A piece of Saynte Pancrat's arme
Item. A bone off Saynt Quyntyn's arme
Item. A bone off Saynt Davyde's arme
Item. A bone off Marye Salome's Arme
Item. A bone off Saynt Edward the Martyr's arme
Item. A bone off Saynt Hierome, with other more
Item. A bone off Saynt Stephen, with other more
Item. A bone of Saynt Blaze, with other more
Item. A bone of Saynt Osmonde, with other more
Item. A bone of Saynt Ursula scole
Item. A chawbone of Saynt Ethelmold
Item. Bones of Saynt Leodigarye and of Saynt Heremei
Item. Bones of Saynt Margarett
Item. Bones of Saynt Arval
Item. A bone off Saynt Aias
Item. A bone off Saynt Andrewe, and two peces off his crosse
Item. A bone off Saynt Fredyswyde
Item. A bone off Saynt Anne, with many other.

There be a multitude of small bonys, &c., wyche wolde occupie iiii schets of papyr to make particularly an inventorye of eny part thereof. They be all at your Lordeschyp's commaundments.

This latter part is in the writing of Dr. London, one of the Visitors of the Monastery. The inventory was sent to Lord Cromwell. Cotton M.S. Cleop. E. IV., fol. 234, in the British Museum.

beloved of God, and that in it are contained the reliques of Saints in greater and more precious quantity than we can in words express." "Novimus et certis experimentis didicimus præfatam Ecclesiam a Deo diligi, et in ea Sanctorum reliquias contineri majore et pretiosiore multitudine, quam verbis explicare possimus." And on another occasion he says of the Priory and of its Church, "that place was sacred from the very earliest times of religion, where also lie many bodies and reliques of Saints." "Locus ille, ab antiquissimo tempore religionis, est sacer; ubi etiam multa corpora, et Sanctorum reliquiæ, requiesecunt." He gives also a list of these reliques. Among the sepulchral remains in their possession were those of two Saxon Kings and Martyrs, and in the catalogue of their reliques, besides many more, were enumerated these following; a portion of the linen that was wrapped around the body of our Lord, of the sponge used at His crucifixion, of the rod of Moses: one of the stones with which Stephen was stoned, some of the frankincense and myrrh offered by the Magi; some of the soil of Bethlehem and of Gethsemane.*

Besides these reliques, which were probably shewn on certain great occasions with much solemnity to the people, there were more systematic efforts made by the Prior and his Brethren to beguile the credulous and unwary. Archbishop Cranmer relates this story of the Holy Maid of Leominster.

"About thirty years past, in the borders of Wales, within a Priory called Lymster, there was a young woman, called 'The Holy Maid of Lymster,' which (as the fame was) lived only by Angel's food, and was enclosed within a grate of iron; unto whom, certain days, when the Prior of the place said Mass, the third part of the Host went, hanging in the air, (by miracles, as it seemed), from the altar where the Prior massed, into the Maid's mouth. Which thing brought the people into a great opinion of holiness in her, and caused great pilgrimage to be

* See Household Roll of Bp. Swinfield, published by the Rev. J. Webb, vol. i., p. 211.

there used. But when the Lord of Burgavenny, with his Brother, Sir Edward Nivel, and divers other Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, came to try the truth hereof, they caused the door to be opened, and straightways the dogs fought for bones that were under the bed; whereupon, they, searching further, found a privy door, where the Prior might resort to her, and she to him at their pleasures. And then she confessed she made, as it were, two fine threads of her own hairs, singly tied together with fine knots, and then made a big hole, with a bodkin, through the corner of a quarter of the Host, and fastened one end of the said hair to the corporus where the said Prior said mass, and the other end to her own bed, wherein she lay, and tied the other hairs fast to the quarter of the Host, and wrapped the other end about her own finger; and when the Prior had received his portion of the Host, she wound up the thread whereunto the Host was tied upon her fingers, and so conveyed the Host into her mouth. This, both she and the Prior confessed, and did open penance for the same."*

Who, in the presence of such tales as these, can wonder at the destruction of the Monasteries? Who can but regret that our holy religion, so elevating in its motives, so pure in its precepts, so satisfying in its teachings to the wants and weakneeses of the human heart, should ever have been disfigured and discredited by such lying vanities, and such unworthy practices? Let us be thankful that although we dō not now possess so largely an endowed Ecclesiastical Institution amongst us, yet that we have a Church left to us, pure in its doctrines, apostolic in its discipline, and leading us according to the teachings of that word which may be "a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths."

* Cranmer's Works, vol. iv., p. 234, Edited by Dr. Jenkins.

CHAPTER III.—A.D. 1539 TO 1861.

SECTION I.—1539—1660.

CONTENTS.—Changes effected by the Dissolution of the Monastery.—The public spirit of the Inhabitants in respect of their School, Commercial Privileges, and Charter.—The Population of the Town, and of the Parish.—Three sources of information.—A list of its Inhabitants.—Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry under Edward VI.—Parochial Registers.—The Petition of the Inhabitants.—The Ten Bridges of the Town.—Review of Price's statement concerning the Earl of Arundel, Bishop Purfrew, Sir James Croft, and Sir Philip Hobby.—Grant of the Charter and its Privileges.—Pensions to the Chauntry Priests.—The Condition of the Town, its Buildings and Guilds.—The first Paving of its Streets.—Its Hospitalities.—Presents of sugar and sack.—Its punishments.—Dirge for Sir Philip Hobby.—Tithes exchanged by Queen Elizabeth.—Encouragement of its Trade by James I.—His visit to Herefordshire.—Letter of Serjeant Hoskyns.—The transfer of the Manor to the Marquis of Buckingham.—Entertainment of Strange Preachers.—Encouragement of Players.—The general sentiments of its Inhabitants.—Extracts from various Minute Books.—The Corporation Knot.—An unpublished Leominster Poem.—Loyalty of Townsmen to Charles I.—Expulsion of the Vicar.—The Capture of the Town by Sir William Waller.—The visit of Charles I., the last royal visit.—Statements of Mr. Williams on this matter considered.—The Town taken by Colonel Birch.—Slight changes effected under the Commonwealth.—Major Winthrop the Commander of its Garrison.—Return of the Rev. J. Tombes.—Manor granted to Henry Marten.—Two singular narratives in connection with Leominster.—"Vox Infantis."—"Strange Newes."—Conclusion.

THE dissolution of the Monastery effected a mighty change in the condition and government of the Town. The Priory was broken up, and its inmates dispersed abroad: and the Chauntry Priests alone were left to assist the Priest assigned to the Parish Church. The alms given away, according to immemorial custom, would necessarily be discontinued; and would cause among the

poorer inhabitants dissatisfaction, and regret; and it is probable that the easy tenure of the inhabitants under the Prior would soon be exchanged for severer rents and payments. The Bailiffs or Magistrates became subject to the jurisdiction of the Court of the Principality and Marches, which was held at Ludlow, under the Lord President, as the representative of the Crown.

The chief Inhabitants of the Town at this period were, however, men of much public spirit, and animated with that desire of union which alone is strength. They exerted themselves in various ways to promote the welfare of the Town, to secure its ancient privileges, and to vindicate for themselves the management of their own affairs. They allowed, for instance, no interruption to their School. On the cessation of the teaching by the Chauntry Priests, which occurred probably soon after the accession of Edward VI. to the throne, they appointed at once a schoolmaster, "one Edward Alan, beinge a man of honest behaver, and well lernyd, who hathe no other lyvyng, but that he hathe of his scolers wekly."

They also applied themselves to the securing to the Town all the commercial advantages resulting from the solemn agreements entered into by the Abbots of Reading and the former heads of the Priory with the citizens of the neighbouring Towns.

In reference to this subject these two documents yet remain in the archives of the Corporation.

The first, a letter from two merchants at Gloucester to Mr. Polle, or Powle, a merchant resident at Leominster, will be at least interesting, as illustrative of the ordinary mode of address prevalent in those days. The second is a memorandum, which will be the best explanation of the Letter itself. Both documents reflect much credit on the activity, self-reliance, and public spirit of the Inhabitants in this time of the transition of the government of the Town from the Priory to themselves.

Gentle Mr Polle,

I comend me most hartyly unto you. Where as the fredome of yor towne with the cytye of Gloc is brought yn to questyo & travrst before the Kynge Majesties honorable councell yn the Murches whereof I had no knowledge till the last weke And upon the hearyng of the matr I callid to remembrans that about ij or iij yerys past you & I had talke thereof & you said you wold at some tyme bryng yor chartr to Gloc & growe to a pfct end for evr. Syns whiche tyme I herd no more of that matr tyll now, whereby my dull memorye hathe renewid or acqueyntas whiche the distans of tyme had so muche duskyd. yor gentlenes & yndifference than shewyd hath mynystrid occasyon & boldnes to wryte to you now, to desyre you to take the paynes to come to Gloc & to bryng with you yor chartr or yor wrytynge that makith for yor fredome. And yor charge shalbe paid with thanks. Mr Mychell comendith hym hartyly unto you, with thanks for yor gentlenes & good chere. Yor gentle mocyon or offer made to hym to come to Gloc hathe movid us so much the rayr to desyre you to accomplysh the same. And I dout not but at yor comyng suche ordr shalbe take betwe us, that charge shalbe avoydid, amytye contynuyd, & Right take place. I pray you of yor answer hereyn yn wrytynge by this bearar, and thus most hartyly fare ye well.

From Gloc the iiijth of Marche Ao 1550.

Yore to theyre power

JOHN RASTELL,
WYLLYAM MYCHELL.

To his frynd Mr Polle,
Mrchant at Lemstr
(wth spede.)

Memorandum, explanatory of the preceding Letter:—

Memoranꝺ. That where the towne of Leomynster claymed theire libtie & fredoome to passe and repasse by vertue of sundry Charters to them graunted heretofore wt theire Mrchaundyse by

the water of Severne. So it is that John Powle of Leomynstr foreseid Mrchaunte and John Edwardes came unto the Citie of Gloucetr for and in the name of the whole towne of Leomynstr aforeseid the tenthe daye of Marche in the fyvethe yere of the raigne of or Sovraigne Lorde Kynge Edwarde the Sixte and there shewed an extracte and copie of theire Charter to the Maire Aldermen and Shiriffs of the said Citie of Gloucetr; at whch daye uppon the vewe of the said extracte and delibate examynacon of the same it was fullie agreed by the said Maior Aldermen and Shiriffs that all the tenants of the landes of the late dissolved Monastory of Redynge and their Celle of Leomynster shall injoye all theire libties and fredoome. And to be free w^in the Citie of Glouc of and for all manr of costomes and other duties and for all kynde of theire mrchandyse to be conveyed or transported by the water of Severne. In witnes wherof to these prsents the Maior Aldermen and Shiriffs of the said citie hathe subscribed theire names the daye and yere above wrytten.

By me, THOMAS PERY, Meyre,
JOHN RASTELL, By me, THOMAS PAYNE,
WYLLYAM MYCHELL, By me, THOMAS LOVEDAY,
WYLLYAM HASSARD, Shreve,
HENRY MACHAN, Shreffe, By me, ROBERT MORTON.

The Maior & Sheriffs lres of Glocestr coc̄ning the Liberties of the Town of Lempstr.

Another proof of the energy and public spirit of the Inhabitants of Leominster at this time is to be found in their urgent and persevering efforts to obtain for their Town a Charter of Incorporation. Before, however, we proceed to give a detailed account of those efforts, it will be desirable to consider a very difficult, but interesting subject, viz. the probable amount of the Population of Leominster at this time. There are three sources from which we may obtain information: from a Subsidy Roll, yet extant, of the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII. (1534)—from a Certificate made, A.D. 1552, by the Commis-

sioners appointed by Edward VI. to enquire into the amount and the disposal of the revenues of the dissolved Monasteries—and from the Parochial Registers, which commence in the third year of Elizabeth, A.D. 1560. These three documents may be considered as illustrations of one and the same period of time; and may afford data by which an approximate degree of correctness, at least, may be arrived at, in the estimate of the population.

In 1534, Henry VIII. demanded a subsidy for the repairing the fortresses at Calais, and for his wars. The Commons gave him what he required, viz. a grant of a 15th and a 10th; that is, a 10th part of the personalty of the Clergy (subject to their own approval in their convocation) and a 15th part of that of the Laity: and, with a greater liberality than usual added, as a mark of their especial favour a grant of 12d. in the pound on lands above £10 per annum, and on goods above £20, payable one-half on the 6th of November, 1535, and one-half on the 6th of November, 1536.

Heref. p'ma soluc̃ Subs̃ a° xxxiiij conc̃ Hundredū de Wolffey

To the Right Hoñable Thesaurer & Barons of the Kynge Eschequier at Westm̃.

We Nicolas Tyttons Thomas Havard & Johñ Bryges thre of the Kyngs Coiss̃en'rs assigned by hys highnes Coiss̃ioñ to usse & others dyrected for taxynge & assessynge of the Kyngs subs w'in the Countie of Heref graunted to hys Majestie at hys Parliament holden at Westm̃ the xxxiiij^ti & xxxv^ti yere of his noble reign & allotted to the hundred of Wolffey in the seid Countie do certyfye yo^r good Lordeships in this volume or estracte the names & surnames of all & syngler the Kyngs subjects dwellynge & abydynge w'in the seid Hundred & contributory to the seid subs̃ w^t the sev'all soñes of money on ev'y of theym̃ by usse by

auctorite of the seid Coiss̄ion assessed & taxed and by one wrytynge indented herunto annexed syngnyfye unto the same yo^{r} good Lordeships as well the name of the high Collector of the seid Hundred as the grose & sev^{r}all soñes to hym wryteñ accordyng to the purporte of the acte of the said subs̄. Yoveñ the xiith day of November in the said xxxv^{ti} yere of the reigñ of our sov^{r}aigñ Lorde Henry the viijth by the grace of Godde of Englande Fraunce & Irelande Kynge Defender of the Feyth & in erthe of the Churche of Englande & Irelande sup^{r}me Hedde.

The Borough of Leomynster.

Joñes Hylsley in bonis	xxxiiij ℔	xxij s̄ viij d̄
Ričus Bell in bonis	xxxj ℔	xx s̄ viij d̄
Robertus Phelips in t^{e}n̄	xx ℔	xx s̄
Rogerus Byrche in t^{e}n̄	xx ℔	xx s̄
Humfridus Bell in t^{e}n̄	lx ℔	vj s̄
Catherina Barra in t^{e}n̄	vij ℔	iiij s̄ viij d̄
Ričus Stevyns in t^{e}n̄	vj ℔	iiij s̄
Ričus Polle in bonis	xx ℔	xiij s̄ iiij d̄
Joñes Passy in bonis	xx ℔	xiij s̄ iiij d̄
Humfridus Lydever in bonis	xx ℔	xiij s̄ iiij d̄
Robtus Patis in bonis	xv ℔	x s̄
Joñes Doancley in bonis	xv ℔	x s̄
Joñes Byngany in bonis	xv ℔	x s̄
Ričus Brydde in bonis	xv ℔	x s̄
Ričus Trumper in bonis	xviij ℔	xij s̄
Wiłłms Ingyłł in bonis	xj ℔	vij s̄ iiij d̄
Joñes Polle señ in bonis	xv ℔	x s̄
Ričus Lłn in bonis	x ℔	vj s̄ viij d̄
Ričus Tayler in bonis	x ℔	vj s̄ viij d̄
Edwardus Colbache in bonis	x ℔	vj s̄ viij d̄

..gnes Grene in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Elizabeth Gravenar in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Johes Brykeman in bonis	xx s	ij d
Thomas Smyth in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Johes Grenewon in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Cristofferus Smyth in bonis	xl s	iiij d
.. .. in bonis	xx s	ij d
.. .. in bonis	xx s	ij d
.. ..	xx s	ij d
Davyd Morrys in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Johes Tyler in bonis	xx s	ij d
Ričus Morrys baker in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Wiłłms Wylcoke in bonis	xx s	ij d
Ričus Daggas in bonis	xx s	ij d
Wiłłms A Lone in bonis	xx s	ij d
Thomas Hampton in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johes A Grene in bonis	xx s	ij d
Thomas Harrys in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Wiłłms Davys in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Walterns Scarlett in bonis	xx s	ij d
Robtus Whythed in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johes Luter in bonis	xl s	
Johes Adams in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Johes Penke in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johes Scott in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johes Broke in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johea Kyntoñ in bonis	xx s	ij d
Johes Goldynge in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Thomas Blacke in bonis	xl s	iiij d
Antonius Walker. .in bonis	xx s	ij d
Henricus Wontnar in bonis	xx s	ij d
Ričus Gyles in Bonis	xx s	ij d
Wiłłms Blacke in bonis	xl s	iiij d

The preceding names have been inserted as a specimen of the Subsidy Roll. The first column gives the amount of the land or goods assessed; the second, the rate of the assessment. The lowest sum charged is three pounds, with a tax of sixpence levied on it. The Inhabitants of Leominster, whose names are recorded as contributing to this Subsidy, are 215 in number. Each of these persons may be considered as a Householder, and an average of five and a-half persons may be allotted to the family of each householder: and thus we shall obtain from the evidence of this Roll, a Ratepaying population of nearly 1200 persons.

It sometimes happened that when the King was pressed for money these subsidy lists were made out only for those who paid the greater sums, and who were the first called upon for their quota. But the length of this list, the number of names, and the small sums inserted in it, render it probable that it was made out, according to the more usual custom, for the whole Town. There must, however, in those days, even more than at present, have been in all Towns many smaller fish, who would altogether escape the net of the tax-gatherer: and we may safely reckon, at least at an equal number, those who did not pay. If we, therefore, add another 1200 persons as the amount of the exempt, pauper, and nomade population, we shall arrive at a census of 2,400 persons. This Subsidy Roll was limited to the Inhabitants of the Town itself: and we may deduce from it evidence to the existence of an exclusively Town Population of 2,400 persons at this time resident at Leominster.

The next document, the Certificate of the Commissioners of Edward VI., plainly relates to the whole Parish of Leominster. The Parish was "very wyde and brode." It contained these townships:—Ivington, Hide, Wintercot, Stagbatch, Cholstrey, Warton, Bryerly, Broadward, Eaton, Hennor, and Stretford, and far exceeded the boundaries of the borough, which, as enumerated in the Charter, are comparatively much circumscribed.

The Countie of Heref. 15.

The Certificat of Willm Crouche, Willm Grene, John Kyngs Ma^{ties} Comyssion to them directed bering date vjth daye Edwarde the Syxte, by the Grace of God Kynge of Englond, also of Irelond, the Sup^{r}me hedde of all Colledgs, Chauntres, Fre

The Hundred of Wolfey.	A Stipendary called Tryny-tie s^{r}vice w^{t} the said Churche.	Certeyn Lands @ Teñts gevyn to mayn-teyn a prest to kepe the said s^{r}vice and to helpe in the quyer of the same Churche	S^{r} Thomas Sebryght, In-cumbent of thage of——yeres havynge for his salary the clére yerly revenue of y^{e} same @ no other lyvynge
The Pishe of Leomyn-ster.	A Chauntry called our Lady Chaun-trey w^{t}in y^{e} said Churche.	Lands @ Teñts gevyn to fynde a preste to celebrate there to pray for the Founder and all Crysten soules	S^{r} Robert Worall Incont-bant of thage of——yeres havyng for his salary there the clere revenues of the same and no other lyvynge
House-lynge people M^{L}DCC.	A Stipendary called o^{r} Lady of pite s^{r}vice w^{t}in the said Churche	Lands @ Teñts called Phylype ap Morgans lands gevyn to fynde a prest to celebrat there to pray for y^{e} Founder @ all Crys-ten soules	S^{r} Phylyp Nicholas In-combent of thage of —— yeres havyng the clere Revenue of the same @ no other lyvynge

Memord that yt ys s^{r}tyfied to us the Kyngs Ma^{ties} Comyssion^{r}s that certey abowte xiiij yeres past was purchased by John Dalowe @ other to employed for the welth @ comoditie of the said Towne as in pavynge lyke busynez w^{t}her w^{t} the said Towne may happyn to be charged w^{t} yeres past oñ Robert Patres purchaser w^{t} the forsaid John Dalowe w yeres rente of the said Lands w^{t}oute thassent of his neighbourghs unt his lyvyng forasmoche as at that tyme his lyvyng was very smale. that syns the said purchase the issues @ p^{r}fetts of the same lands c or ymployed to the use of the said service.

And also webe certified that the said Towne of Leymster ys the Kyng Hereford @ the pishe therof very wyde @ brode In whyche towne behaver @ well lernyd who hathe no other lyvyng but that he hath in the same towne.

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy of the Original Record in the custody of th Vict., cap. 94., the same being sealed with the Seal of the said Public Record

Skudamore, and John Borne, Esquyers, Comyssionors appointed by the
of February, in the fyrst yere of the reigne of or Sovraigne Lorde Kynge
France @ Irelond, Defender of the Fayth and of the Church of Englond @
Chappells, Guylds, Stipendaryes, & suche other lyke as hereafter ensuythe.

The Lands @ Teñts be- longyng to ye same be of ye yerely value of.... Reprises yerely..... And so remayn clere..	li. s. d. x. xiij. iij. wherof in xlij. x. viij. x. v.	Ornaments, plate, jewells, @ stoks to the same belonging	None
The Lands @ Teñts be- longynge to the same be of ye yerely value of.... Reprises yerely..... And so remayn clere..	li. s. d. viij. vj. v. wherof in xii. iii. vii. xiii. x.	Plate @ Jewells xx ouncs valued at ..... Ornaments to the same valued at ..	s. d. xxvi. iv. s. d. xxv. viij.
The Lands @ Teñts be- longynge to the same be of ye yerely value of.... Reprises yerely..... And so remayn clere..	li. s. d. l. viij. wherof in x. x. xxxix. x.	Ornaments, plate, jewells, @ Stoks to the same belongyng	None

n lands @ teñts called Barbors Lands beinge wtin the Towne of Lymster
thentent yt the issues @ pffytts therof above all charges might be for evr
of Strets, mendyng of brydgs, Repayryng of the mrkett place, @ suche other
And yt the said issues have byn employed accordynly Savyng aboute thre
ch had the rewle @ other of the said lands to the uses aforsaid payed one halff
o the said Sir Phylipe, Incombent of the said srvice of or Lady of Pyte towards
And that the Towne then had no gret busynesse. And further yt ys srtyfied
or eny pte or pcell therof shulde be for evr or for any terme yet duryng used

s Matics borowe towne @ the greatist Markett towne wtin the Countie of
ys a Gramer scole kepte by one Edward Alen beinge a man of honest
of his scolers wekly. And tha evr before thys tyme ther hath byn scole kepte

e Master of the Rolls, preserved in the Public Record Office, London, pursuant to Stat. 1 & 2
Office, London, pursuant to the said Statute.
JOSEPH REDINGTON, Assistant Keeper of the Public Records, 9 April, 1861.

This Certificate is the most important document extant in connection with the Borough of Leominster. We shall again refer to it in our account of the efforts made by the Inhabitants to obtain their Charter. We now allude to it as affording, in the term "Houselynge people," the key to the number of the population. This expression—"Houselynge, or Husseling people" is derived from the Saxon word Husel, or Ousel*—Eucharist; and its use in this document is equivalent to stating the number of persons in the Parish of Leominster at this time who were Communicants. It does not assert that on any one particular occasion 1700 persons partook of the Communion at Leominster; but it implies that in this Parish 1700 persons resided, who were Communicants at one time or another. In those days all persons arrived at years of discretion became, as a matter of course, Communicants, and were reckoned among the "Houselynge people:" and thus the term "Houselynge people," or persons qualified to be Communicants afford a guide to the extent of the population of the Parish at this time. If we calculate, as I think we may safely do, half the population to be included in the term "Houselynge people," and if we add another moiety to the 1700 persons included under that term in this Certificate, we shall arrive at an approximate population in the whole Parish "wyde and brode," amounting to 3,400 persons.

The Parochial Registers are universally acknowledged to be an authentic source of information in an estimate of human population. They commence at Leominster with the year 1560, and, with an interruption of about five years, are perfect to the close of the century. A minute examination of them has brought to light a curious circumstance; that twice, during that interval, the Parish of Leominster must have been visited by a

* "Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin—
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanealed."

Hamlet, Act I., Sc. 5.

severe plague or sickness.* In 1587, two hundred and nine—and in 1597, one hundred and thirty-four deaths are recorded. Omitting, however, the excess of these two years, the registered average of funerals is about seventy-eight yearly. The present death rate of the population, according to the published calcu-

* The occasional prevalence of some severe epidemic was no unusual occurrence in the Towns and Villages of this district in the 16th century. A similar visitation, though more severe in its character, raged in the Parish of Bishop's Castle, in the County of Salop, at the close of this century. The annual average of funerals in that parish was 25, and in the year 1593, one hundred and eighty-two deaths are recorded, of which 135 are registered in the months of July and August. This striking entry is made in the Register Book, probably by the Incumbent:—

Hoc tempore cœpit Deus nos castigare acri sua castigatione, ita ut 174 homines et pueri gravissimo et violentissimo morbo, et contagio pestilentiæ correpti mortem obierunt. Sic visum est Deo nos affligere, quia in tanta messe, et prædicatione verbi sui justos et sanctos fructus Spiritus non protulerimus; sed verbo Dei spreto sanctum Sabbatum violavimus. xx^mo enim die Junii, (qui fuit dies dominicus) majores plœrique et inhabitantes hujus Burgi, non sentierunt, ut nundinæ eo die servarentur—quo circa in ipso scelere ut fures deprehensi sunt."—The fair (nundinæ) or village wake was usually held on the Sunday: but was given up on that occasion. In the month of October, this entry occurs, written by the same hand:—"Hoc tempore, Deo miserante, cessavit contagium." The Author is indebted for this information to the Rev. W. M. Rowland, Vicar of Bishop's Castle.

The epidemic at Leominster at this time was more gradual, and of longer duration. It evidently extended through eight months—from May to the end of December. The highest mortality was in September, when 41 deaths are registered. The Parish of Leominster appears to have been in an unhealthy condition during the whole latter portion of this century. The Registers of the Parish of Ludlow give an excess of Marriages and of Births over those of Leominster in the ratio of 17 to 15; whereas the Funeral Registers of Leominster exceed those of Ludlow in the same proportion of 17 to 15. This fact shews that the mortality at Leominster was, through this period, considerably in excess of its legitimate average. The introduction of the Collect in our Prayer Book, directed to be used "in the time of any common plague or sickness" is an evidence to the occurrence of these Visitations at this period. The Author is indebted to some writers in "Notes and Queries" for information shewing, that in certain localities of England, the years 1587 and 1597 were "plague years." This might have been the sickness which caused this mortality at Leominster.—See Notes and Queries, No. 286, p. 497—Saturday, June 22, 1861.

lations of the Registrar-General is, for country districts, about 22⅛ in the 1,000. The general average, however, would be higher in those days, when less attention was paid to the promotion of the health and comfort of the masses of the people: and if we take 25 in 1,000 as the probable average of deaths at this period, then the yearly returns of 78 funerals throughout this interval will corroborate the preceding calculations, and will attest to a population, resident in the parish, exceeding 3,000 persons. We thus obtain, from these various sources of information, reasons to believe that the population of the Town of Leominster amounted at this time to about 2,400 persons, and the population of the whole Parish, "wyde and brode," approximated to 3,400 persons.

This Population was energetic and united. The leaders in the Town had already exerted themselves for the education of their youth, and for the vindication of their commercial privileges; and at this time they make every effort to secure to themselves the grant of a Royal Charter, and other more solid and substantial advantages. One object of the Commissioners appointed by the King, whose Report has been already inserted, was to extinguish the Chauntries yet left to the Parish Churches, and to dispose of their lands. The Inhabitants of Leominster boldly asked the King to transfer to their use the lands attached to the three Chauntries, about to be extinguished. "They," says Blount, "petitioned King Edward VI. to this effect:—'That there were in their Town to the number of 2,000 Husseling people: that there were three Chauntries belonging to the Church, viz. the Chauntry of St. Mary; the Chauntry of Trinity Service, and the Chauntry of the Service called "Our Lady of Pity," otherwise called the Chauntry of "Philip ap Morgan's lands:" that one of these Chauntry Priests served the Grammar School; the second Chauntry Priest the Writing School; and the third the A. B. C. School: that the King had within their borough—of Burgage rents, Cottage rents, and

Kenel* rents to the value of Liii. iis. 6d.: that they had 10 stone bridges† to maintain; and therefore they prayed the King would

* The "Kenel" Rents were payments for the privilege of pannage (see p. 11. the feeding swine on the acorns, &c. of the Manorial woods) rendered, in earlier times, by the Tenants to the Lord. "Kenel" is an Anglicised form of "Cenellœ"—acorns: from the French "chesne," *i. e.* "chene."

† Although this Petition is not to be found, yet the fact it records relating to the 10 Stone Bridges in Leominster is correct. These 10 Bridges all appear in the Chamberlain's accounts, as chargeable on the Bailiff or Burgesses for repairs.

1. Spytell Bridge, the boundary of the Borough towards Ludlow, on the North, so called from the Hospital of the Priory, which is situated close beside it.
2. Marsh Broad Bridge.
3. Lug Bridge, over the Lug, at the junction of the Marsh with Mill Street.
4. Kenwater Bridge.
5. Pinsley Bridge, over the Pinsley, at the bottom of Broad Street.

Leland, in his Itinerary, thus speaks of these three last-named bridges:—"In the west end of the town there be three stone bridges. The first over Pensilly, a little brooket that riseth not much above the Church of Kingsland and thence runneth under the aforesaid bridge in Leominster, and so goeth through the very house of the Priory, and thence not farre of into Lugge by the right ripe.

"The second over Kene water, that after a small course beneath the bridge goeth into Lug.

"The third is called Lug Bridge, and as I remember, it is the greatest of the three, and hath most arches."

6. The Priory Bridge.

This bridge had only stone coigns, and a stone pillar or buttress set in the stream, and supporting the centre of the arch. The bridge itself was of wood, and had a wooden door, and wooden steps on either side, which led to the mounting of the arch. These different parts of the bridge are mentioned for repairs in the Chamberlain's accounts.

7. The Popland's Bridge: now passed over in the walk through "Paradise" from the Priory Bridge to the Poplands. The title "Paradise" to this walk is no modern name. It occurs two centuries back in the Chamberlain's accounts.
8. Eastey, or Easther's Bridge.

This bridge is now removed. It stood on the old road from Leominster to Stockton Cross, when it ran on the south side of St. Anthony's Garth, alias, the Popland's Meadow, and carried that road across the stream called Ridgemoor. It was taken down, about forty years ago, when the present bridge in the Stockton Road was erected, and its materials were in part used in the

give them their Chauntries, and the Cottage rents, and renew their Charter." This Petition is not now to be found in either the "Record" or any other public office. It is, however, evidently founded on this Return made by these Commissioners; and this Return may possibly be the document alluded to by Mr. Blount.

The Inhabitants yet further sought to enlist in their behalf the sympathies of a Townsman, who at that time was a member of the Privy Council, and had, by his stedfast adherence to the Reformed Faith, some interest at Court. A copy of the

construction of that bridge. It was sometimes entered in the accounts as Ridgemoor Bridge.

9. Etnam Street Bridge—the bridge now crossed over, at the end of Etnam Street, near the White Lion Inn, as you pass to the footpath leading to the Railway Station.

There can be no mistake about this bridge, as it answers directly to this entry in the Chamberlain's accounts :—

Item—Paid for conveying settles for the repair of the loupe near the bridge at Etnam Street end .. .. iijs

The loupe was a watering-place for horses; and it is still distinctly to be seen between the bridge and the White Lion Inn.

10. Hucke Bridge.

This bridge seems to have quite lost its ancient name. This is the more curious as it is mentioned in the Charter as being on the boundary line of the Borough, and is contained in the Chamberlain's account by this very name late down in the last century. It is now taken down: but it crossed the Pinsley, and stood close to the cottage, which was the old Turnpike Gate, in near proximity to Eaton Bridge. It adjoins the junction of the Pinsley with the Lug—and hence, probably, its name; for in the Chamberlain's accounts of 1710 it is thus written :—

1710. Item.—Paid Mr. Pember and Benj. Hodges, for work and materials at Hook Bridge 6 6
1606. Item—To John Hill for making a loupe or branch next Hucke Bridge ... . iijs viiid

One of these bridges is mentioned frequently in the Chamberlain's accounts, under the title of the "Red Cross Bridge." The author is unable to identify it, but believes it to have been the bridge, No. 5, over the Pinsley, at the bottom of Broad Street, as that was a Red brick Bridge, while Vicarage Street and the Dingle form a Cross with Broad Street.

Lugg, in the British Lugwy, is so called from the clearness of its stream. Llug, which signifies light, or brightness—and gwy or wy, the appellative for river, or water.—Price's History, p. 48.

following Letter, addressed on the subject of the Charter, to Sir Philip Hobby, is still found in the Records of the Corporation :—

Right wor^shipfull Mester

Or hnmble recomendacons right hertyly remembered. So thought it we or dueties to signyfy unto you that the xx^th of this monethe we receavyd yor lres of the x^th of the same by thand of or bayliffe newly (as juste occasion did s^rve as ye knowe) elected by us & being for the meane tyme aucthorysed by order of the K. Ma^ties Counsell in the M^rches of Wales before whom the title of or possessions hetherto contynewyng hath ben in deliberate examynation & so day is to be p^rfyxed before them for the openyng of or lawfull title to the possessions & for the allowauns of the K. Ma^ties patent. yf just case thereof acording to his graces lawes & statute shall so appere upon examynacon of the mater. Whereunto all we have ev^r & will undoubtedly (we assure you) most obediently frame & conforme ourselves. ..... Wherefore we most humbly & hartyly pray you so equally to ponder the p^rmysses that in pformans of yor first comfortable lett^r ye will contynue yor goodnes & goodwyll towards us y^r lovyng & faithfull contremen & not to w^thdrawe the same the whiche we trust God willing we will not des^rve, and pray you also to consyder how p^rvencon by or adv^rsaryes whom we trusted being dayly conversant amongst us hath renued or troble whiche was cause of or sute & albeit or sute taketh no place yet we thynke it no conclusion to p^rjudice or title. Wherefore as we beare or faithfull harts to you so instantly we pray you to lett us not relinquishe or possessions till ether we knowe what agrem^ts shalbe made or that the same shall happen to be evicted from us by the due order of the K. Ma^ties lawes, the judgements whereof we most gladly will obey. This sames troblyng you for answere as or duetyes requyre w^t theffects of or myndes we pray ye taccept the same & the tedyousnes thereof in most faithfull parte comytting

you to the tuycon of the Holy Goost contynuyng yor help wt encrease of honor. Lempster in the Vigile of the Natyvyte of or Lorde.

Yor Orators & faithfull contrymen humble at comandemt. the Burgesses & inhabytants of Lemptr subscribed

In Dorso.
To Sir Phip Hobby, Kt.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of Leominster, and the exertions of Sir Philip Hobby were not in vain. Edward VI. ordered Letters Patent to be prepared for the granting the Charter, and for the transferring, on certain conditions, to the Bailiff and Corporation the Chauntry Lands and Cottage Rents; but his premature death caused the proceedings to be stayed.

Queen Mary ascended the throne A.D. 1554. The commencement of her reign was disturbed by an attempt at a disputed succession. The Inhabitants of Leominster on this occasion rallied round the Crown, and obtained from the Queen at the close of the first year of her reign the long-coveted Charter, as a peculiar mark of her favour, and as an express token of her appreciation of their loyalty. "Know ye (are the words of the preamble of the Charter) that We for the care industry and faithful services of the Bailiff, Burgesses, and Inhabitants of the Borough of Leominster aforesaid, in the time of the rebellion, by John late duke of Northumberland attainted and convicted of high treason, and his confederates attempted against us, our crown and dignity, heretofore done us as by loyal subjects, in that according to their strength and ability, they did, as we are informed, valiantly withstand the said late duke and his confederates aforesaid, who to us were most troublesome, quelling as much as in them lay, their rash attempt: being willing of our clemency further to consult the interest, profit, and advantage of the Bailiff, Burgesses, and Inhabitants of the Borough aforesaid, and their successors, as well in consideration of the premises, as of their hearty affection towards us, and graciously granting the petition aforesaid, of our special grace, certain knowledge, and

mere motion, have granted, and by these presents for ourselves, our heirs and successors, do grant to the same men, burgesses, and inhabitants, that the same borough and town of Leomynster be hereafter one body corporate in thing, deed and name, and one community for ever, and that they have a pepetual succession," &c.

It is always an unpleasant office to point out errors, but sometimes it cannot be avoided with a due regard to truth. Such must be the apology of the Author on this occasion, for speaking of that extraordinary collection of errors and mis-statements made by Mr. Price in his narrative of the event alluded to in the Preamble of this Charter. Mr. Price has magnified the feeble attempt of Lady Jane Grey, and the ill-planned rebellion of the Duke of Northumberland into the colossal proportions of a National convulsion. He states that a great battle took place, and that "the forces near Leominster, in the service of Lady Jane Grey, amounted to nearly thirteen thousand men." There is not the shadow of a foundation for this statement. Lady Jane Grey only exercised for nine short days her ill-fated sovereignty: and it was an impossible thing in those days to have raised in so brief an interval, in any single county in England, an army approaching to the number of men stated by Mr. Price to have been collected at Leominster. The most reliable accounts assert that the whole troops collected by the Duke of Northumberland on the one side, and by Queen Mary's partisans on the other, amounted to less than 12,000 men—that no sword was drawn—that no combat nor collision took place between the forces: but that "the Queen, without any effusion of blood, was peaceably settled on the throne, notwithstanding the attempts to deprive her of it." Well may Mr. Price attach to his assertion the statement—"but no detail of particulars is given, nor the precise day of battle."

Mr. Price makes four different persons of high rank and influence, viz.—the Earl of Arundel, Bishop Purfrew, Sir James

* Rapin's Hist. of England, vol. ii., p. 31.

Croft, and Sir Philip Hobby to have been present, and to have taken part in these transactions, when all and each of these persons must have been at this crisis, in totally different parts of the kingdom.

The Earl of Arundel was, through the suspicions of the Duke of Northumberland, confined a close prisoner to the Tower, during the first eight days of Lady Jane Grey's possession of the throne. On the ninth day he made his escape; and proceeded with the utmost boldness to urge on the Privy Council, and on the Lord Mayor of London, the Proclamation of Queen Mary: and thus his energetic conduct in the Capitol caused the immediate cessation of the rebellion. No forces any where in the provinces could have been led by him, nor could he have been "then at Hereford."

Bishop Purfrew was a well-known ecclesiastic of great influence and ability. He was, however, at this time, the occupant of the see of St. Asaph, and lived there in great hospitality and credit. He would therefore have been at this crisis in his own diocese, and not have been found fighting at the head of rabble troops in Herefordshire.*

Sir James Croft was Constable of the Tower, and, though a strong Papist, was induced to hold it for Lady Jane Grey; and was present, by the requirements of his office, during the whole period of her short-lived occupation of that fortress. He is said to have connived at the Earl of Arundel's escape, and by this act to have made his peace with Queen Mary, who secured to him throughout her reign his office of Constable. His continued residence in the Tower during Lady Jane's Sovereignty is an insuperable obstacle to his having taken any part in leading the forces at Leominster, collected in behalf of Queen Mary.

* This prelate was afterwards translated by Queen Mary to the See of Hereford, when she put out Bishop Harley, on account of his being a married man. This Bishop Purfrew in his turn displaced Miles Jefferies from the Vicarage of Leominster and placed in his room Mr. Polle or Powle, a Papist, a connection, probably, of the Merchant Mr. Polle, or Powle.—Goodwin. de Præs. Angliæ.

Sir Philip Hobby was no less incapacitated from fulfilling the task assigned him. The troops (of Queen Mary), according to Mr. Price, "advanced under the command of Sir Philip Hobby, an inhabitant of Leominster, who led the main body, and who subsequently received from the Queen the honour of knighthood in reward for his services." The history of Sir Philip Hobby—Hobie, or Hoby—for his name is spelt in all these ways, is in itself an ample refutation of these statements. Mr. William Hoby, of Leominster, who was himself a younger son of Walter Hoby, of Badland, County of Radnor, where the family had long been located, had two sons, Philip and Thomas Hoby, both of whom attained to considerable distinction during the reign of Henry VIII. Thomas was for some time Embassador to Paris, and died in that City. He was the founder of a line of Baronets, which became extinct in 1766. Philip, with whom this history is concerned, devoted himself to the profession of the law, and attained to the dignity of the coif. He, however, like his brother, won his chief honours not as a jurist but as a diplomatist, being entrusted by Henry VIII with several missions, the conduct of which required the utmost tact, secrecy, and prudence. He was, in 1537, associated with Holbein to procure the picture of the Duchess of Milan, at the time when Henry VIII, at the suggestion of the Emperor Charles V., had a passing idea of marrying that lady. Shortly after this, he was united with Sir Thomas Wyatt in an Embassy to the Emperor, upon this same subject.* For these delicate services, ably and discretely performed, Serjeant Hobby was knighted, and made a Privy Councillor by Henry VIII. He was zealously attached to the reformed faith, and thus had, from his seat at the council board, and from his frequent presence in London, considerable influence at the Court of Edward VI., which caused the Inhabitants of Leominster to apply to him for assistance in the

* See, for these facts:—"Flem. Cat. State Paper Office, 1537-38," and "Harl. MSS." 282, 73.

matter of their Charter. But these very opinions would operate against him in the reign of Mary, and would prevent him from either being active in her service, or from receiving any favours at her hands.

The letter already printed in these pages, and evidently written before Mary's accession to the throne, was addressed to him as Knight, and affords indisputable proof that he could not "have received from that Queen the honour of Knighthood in reward for his services." It was equally impossible that so wary a Lawyer and so experienced a Privy Councillor as Sir Philip Hobby, whose only connection with Leominster was the accident of his birth, and whose residence was at a distance, either in London, or at his own country seat at Bysham,* in the County of Berks, should at this time have been present in this Town, or that any troops should have "advanced under the command of Sir Philip Hobby, an inhabitant of Leominster." And it will be a satisfaction to the Inhabitants of Leominster that they do not owe their Charter to the court favour or personal interest of any individual, but that they can look on their Charter as an honourable and permanent token of the loyalty of their forefathers, and as the well deserved reward of their hearty affection to the Crown in a time of difficulty and of danger.

This Charter conferred on the Bailiff and Burgesses large and extensive privileges: a perpetual succession, an election of

* Item—(in the Chamberlain's accounts for 1556)—That the sayd Philipp Morris spent ryding to Bysam to speke wt Sr Philipp Hobby, Knight, being sent by the Corporacon .. .. vjs. viijd.

Mr. Price makes Sir Philip Hobby to be the second Bailiff of the Corporation in 1555. The Chamberlain's Books assign the office for this year to Mr. John Powle, or Polle, the Merchant, to whom the letter was addressed (see p. 51). Sir Philip was, as a compliment, nominated in the Charter as one of the original 24 Capital Burgesses; but he never discharged the office of Bailiff. His attachment to the Reformed Faith would, in Mary's reign, be a sufficient impediment to his election. Mr. Powle was a Papist.

their own Magistrates, to whom was entrusted a plenary jurisdiction in the Town, and a right to enjoy all the privileges and liberties hitherto exercised by the Lord Abbots of Reading; an assay, and assize of bread, wine, and ale, and of all other vendible victuals whatsoever; a Court of Record to be held every second week on Monday, for ever, for recovery of debts not exceeding five pounds, and invested with powers of warrants and mandates, attachments, &c., such as elsewhere were exercised by the Sheriffs; a gaol, or prison; a right of two fairs, one fair to be kept there on the Feast of St. Peter the Apostle, and on the morrow after the same feast, and another fair to be kept there yearly on the Feast of Simon and St. Jude the Apostles, and on the morrow after the same feast; a free ingress and egress to all persons to such fairs; a Coroner; a Grammar School, with an endowment of twenty pounds a year for the instruction and education of youth in the Borough aforesaid; a right to hold lands and property in common; an actual gift of certain lands and tenements, on the payment of a fee-farm rent of £16 17s. 3d. Thus the Inhabitants obtained the privileges of self-government, which they had long coveted; the transfer to them of the lands attached to the three Chauntries (of St. Mary's, Trinity Service, and the Service of our Lady of Pity, otherwise called the Chauntry of Philip ap Morgan's lands) contained in their Parish Church (in accordance with their own petition), and the enjoyment, for ever, of the Burgage Cottage and Kenel Rents which had passed from the Priory to the Crown; and they were worthy of these favours by their loyalty, their union, their commercial activity, their public spirit, as well as by their position as "the greatest Market Town within the County of Hereford."

It is satisfactory to know that in this disposal of the Chauntry Lands, consideration was shown to existing interests, and that pensions were reserved to the three Priests serving in

the three respective Chapelries attached to the Parish Church. These pensions were paid in 1553—

To Robert Werall, Incumbent of St. Mary's Chauntry ... ... £vj.

To Thomas Shebright, Incumbent of Trinity Chauntry ... ... £v.

To Phil. Nicholas, Incumbent of our Lady of Pity Chapel* ... ... £j. ixs. ixd.

This latter received, also, a payment from the Bailiff and Burgesses: charged in the Chamberlain's account.

1556. Item—Sir Philip Nicholas of Annuities... xxs.

This gift of the Charter involved the Bailiff and Burgesses in considerable expenses. It was not an honour that cost them nothing. Besides a large outlay in legal charges, they were called upon to provide things necessary for the due maintenance of the increased dignity and importance of the newly-created Corporation. These charges occur in the Chamberlain's accounts:—

1553. Item—To Humfray Strett, for his cost susteynede in the lawe concrnyng the balywyke of Leomynstr .. .. xls. viijd.

„ Item—gevyn to Mr Fraunc. Savage to have his lawfull fafur. tyll Hyllarii terme to inRolle or Charter .. .. xs.

„ Item—to Willm Brown, in money, for the inrollyng of or Charter, and towards his charge xxs.

„ Item—to the ij Macys .. .. vjs. viijd.

1554. Item—paid to Philipp Storr for his staff .. iijs. ivd.

„ Item—to Hew Philipps for a case to cary the Charter in—prce of .. .. .. iijs. ivd.

„ Item—gave to Wylliam Poull and Jon Caldwall, Chambrlyns, for v yardes of cloth for the sergeants' gowns .. .. .. xxvjs. viijd.

Leominster, at the date of the gift of its Charter, had all the accompaniments and accessories of a first-class Town. It

* Willis's "Mitred Abbeys," vol. ii., p. 92.

had its Town Hall (ornamented with a clock—an unusual addition in those days); its ancient Frere-Chamber or Council Room; its magnificent Parish Church; its Grammar School; its Market Place and Corn Square; its annual fairs; its pillory and prison; its paved streets, and its various guilds or fraternities of traders.

These following items, contained in the Chamberlain's accounts, identify several of these Buildings:—

1554. Item—For vj dayes werke to Will^{m} Caldwall, for tylyng upon the Corne markett howse, and ye pyllary Howse, the Crosse House, the Forbury gate House, and ye Court House .. .. vs.

[The Grammar School was held in this last building.]

1557. Item—John Lokyer for keping the clock .. xiijs. iiijd.

Item—To Jo^{n} Peynter, for painting y^{e} Orologe .. .. vj. viijd.

„ Item—For ij tymber trees and other sawyd timber, and sawyd planks, by Woddon's judgment and other workmen for the gayle xiijs. iiijd.

These guilds or fraternities of persons engaged in the same trade had not at Leominster, as it was their custom to have in the larger Towns, any separate Chamber, or Council Room, or Guildhall. They met for the conduct of the business of their respective Societies in the Frere Chamber, or Council Room of the Corporation, and paid a certain composition for the use of this privilege. Five of these minor Corporations appear to have made a fixed arrangement with the Bailiff and Burgesses, and to have compounded for the use of the Council Chamber on the payment of the annual sum of twenty pence.

The Chamberlain's account for the Second and Third of Philip and Mary contain this item:—

And they (the Chamberlain's) pray allowance that should be paid of annuities by the V. occupacons that have composicon .. .. .. viijs. iiiid.

And the accounts of the next year, Third and Fourth of Philip and Mary, have this statement:—

The Annual Rents of thoccupacons payable to the Chamb of the Towne at Michaelmas.

Imprmis—of the Cordyners [Cordwainers or Shoemakers]	xxd.
Itm—of the Tanners	xxd.
Itm—of the Bochers	xxd.
Itm—of the Mrers, Taylors and Drāps	xxd.
Itm—the Bakers	xxd.

These Societies paid other fines in addition to their compositions for the occupation of the Chamber. In the Chamberlain's account, for example, of the preceding year, the Second and Third of Philip and Mary, these items occur:—

Item—of the Tanners, for the fyne of their coposicon	vjs. viijd.
Item—of the Drāps and Mrers for their fyne ..	vs.

The Chamberlain's accounts for 1580, contain this longer list of these fraternities. The Walkers were the ancient name of the Fullers.

Item—receaved of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Mercers	xxd.
Item—receaved of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Taylors	xxd.
Item—receaved of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Walkers and Dyers	xxd.
Item—of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Glovers ..	xvd.
Item—of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Shomakers	xxd.
Item—of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Tanners ..	xxd.
Item—of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Bochers ..	xxd.
Item—of the Wardens of thoccupacon of Bakers ..	xxd.

The tradesmen forming the most numerous or important of these guilds resided, and for the most part carried on their business, in their own peculiar quarter of the Town. Thus—the Drapers frequented the Lane, still bearing their name: the

Butchers were located in that part of the Narrows, between the Corn Market and the High Street, still called the Butchery.

1535. Item—of the heyres of Jo^{n} Stevyns for iij yeres rent for the voyd ground in the Bochery.. ijs.

The Tanners probably lived and followed their occupation on the east side of Broad Street; for, lately, Mr. Alderman Stallard, on making extensive alterations in his premises, found a succession of pits full of tan: and this discovery seems to connect this situation with the ancient Society of Tanners.

No stranger could enter the Town and set up any of the above-named occupations, unless he was properly admitted into the guild or fraternity connected with his trade. These admissions were accompanied with certain payments. The accounts of 1583-84 give some examples of these admissions into the various Companies.

Item—Receaved of John Drap for his incom into Company of M^{r}cers .. .. .. xxijs.

Item—Receaved of John Ridway, for his income into the Company of Tanners .. .. xxvjs. viijd.

Item—Receaved of Willm Poull for his income into the Company of Shewmakers .. xxs.

The first paving of the Streets occurred at this time, as the result of the additional stimulus imparted to the public spirit and energy of the Inhabitants by the sense of their greater importance, in the change in the government of their Town, by its reception of its Charter.

These items are contained in the Chamberlain's accounts for the Second and Third years of Philip and Mary, 1556:—

Item—gevyn to the Pavur in ernest .. .. vjd.

Item—for paving in the highe strett $\frac{xx}{v}$ and xvij yardes (five score and seventeen yards) .. xiiijs. jd.

Item—for the breking uppe of the Pament to his man .. .. vjs.

Item—to the Paviar of Hereford for paving in the Marche .. .. xvjd.

Item—for paving $\frac{xx}{iij}$ yardes by Mr. Byrche's house (three score yards)	vijs.	vjd.
Item—to John Greene for making the stone walls ther		xxjd.
Item—to Bayly and Bylwyn for wurking w^{t} the Masons and Pavur and carying stuff ..	iiijs.	
Item—to Mr. Hillesley that he leyd out to the Pavur	xiiijs.	xd.
Item—payd for nyne score and one yardes paving in the Highe Strett at 1d. ob. the yard ..	xxijs.	vjd.
Item—for dyggyng of sand		xd.
Item—to John Poull Baker for carryage of stones and sand in the Hyghe Strett	iiijs.	viijd.
Item—for W^{m} Smith of the Redd wode ..		vjd.

The New Bailiff and Capital Burgesses were not deficient in providing the courtesies of the day, or in offering their hospitalities, as opportunity required, to illustrious strangers passing through the Town. This custom was partly one of compliment, and partly of necessity, arising from the circumstances of the times.

In those days, all moving from place to place was effected on horseback. The roads were very bad, and would cause fatigue and discomfort to the traveller. The Inns or Hostelries, even in the Towns, would provide but poor and limited accommodation: and, therefore, the Justice, itinerating or riding round his Circuit—or the Lord President proceeding to enter on his jurisdiction at Ludlow, the seat of residence of the President of Wales and of the Marches—or the man of rank, accompanied with a retinue of servants and attendants, would necessarily be beholden to the Municipal Officers of the Towns through which they passed for hospitality and provision. If they stayed only for a rest they were waited upon with due ceremony, and offered wine in the Town's name: if they remained for the night they slept at the Bailiff's house, and their charges were met at the

These items, illustrative of these hospitalities, occur in the Chamberlain's accounts: —

1554. Item—to Johān Dalowe for the expence spent by the Towne upon Sir Antony Kynston xls. viijd.

„ Item—for a gallone and a-half of claret wine, and a pottell of seke p^r^sentyde in the name of the towne to Mr. Justes Townsend, S^r^ Ja^s^ Baskyrfielde, Mr. Scudmore, and Mr. Monyngton .. .. ijs. iiijd.

1555. Item—paid for the Justice of Assise lying in the Towne all night, for horse, meat, and other things .. .. xijs. xd.

1556. Item—spent on the Justices of Assize at their fyrst cūmyng .. .. iijs. xd.

„ Item—at Mr. Seburns cūmyng throughe the towne, in wyne, ale, and kakes .. .. xviijd.

1557. Item—To Mr. Deane of Hereford, in wyne xijd.

„ Item—at my Lord Sanders being here in wyne .. .. vs.

„ Item—in expenses upon L^d^ President cūmyng through the Town, as may appear by particular somes .. .. .. xxvijs. vd.

1572. Item—paid at Mr. Craswell's the xxv day of July, for wyne and bred when the Lord of Essex came through the Towne .. .. xxs.

„ Item—paid to Thom^as^ Poull the second of August, to make the Lord Paget dryncke .. ijs. vid.

These courtesies were not confined to Lords Presidents and Judges of Assize, but were extended by the Bailiff and Burgesses to their influential country neighbours on their visiting the Town. Among those thus honoured were the families of the Conyngsbys at Hampton; of the Harleys of Brampton Brian; of the Crofts of Croft Castle; of the Baskervilles of Eardisley; and the Warncombes of Ivington.

1554. Item—to Mr. Powll for exspence spent by hym in the name of the Towne upon Mr. Saly, for his gentylness shewyde to the Towne for lending of xxl. .. .. iijs. viijd.

1555. Item—to Nycholas Bailey for sack and wyne at Mr. Conysby's cūmyng to Towne .. ijs. xd.

„ Item—to the sayd Nycholas for the Clerke of the Marketts dyn^{r} .. .. .. iijs. iiijd.

„ Item—to Mr. Poull for j gā. sack and j gā. of Malmesay to Hampt^{n} .. .. .. iiijs.

1556. Item—that was gevyn to Mr. Kerry j po. sack and j po. Gaskoyne wyne and iiijd. in sug^{r} ijs.

Mr. Warncombe, in an especial manner, received favours from the Bailiff and Burgesses, and succeeded to the place of Sir Philip Hobby as their Patron and Benefactor. He served as their Representative in Parliament, and was recognised as their standing Counsel. The express appointment of a Recorder was only granted to the Corporation by the Charter of Charles II.; but Mr. Warncombe performed all the duties of this office, and received from the Corporation that very same amount of remuneration which was afterwards, through nearly two centuries, paid to the Recorder. He was connected, for forty years, with the Corporation, and as the following items shew, both received favours from, and gave in his turn favours to, the Town, throughout that long period.

1554. Item—for Johān Poll vydow for chesse to send to Mr. Warncombe to have his goode wyll ijs.

„ Item—to Thom^{as} Bayley, the caryer, for the carege of the same chese to London .. vjd.

„ Item—to Walter Symons for the carege of a lett^{r} to Mr. Warncombe to London* .. iiijd.

„ Item—for wyne to Mr. Warncombe to have his councell for matters app^{r}teyning to the Towne .. .. viijd.

1555. Item—for Warncombe's dyn^{r}, and those of the Corporation that dyned with him at Mr. Poule's .. .. xvijs.

* This was the ordinary mode of conveyance, even at a century later. "Mr. Gower telles me, he writ to you, and so did I, by the carrier of Lemster, when your father writ to your tutor: for your father writ by both the carriers, feareing the one of them might faile the delivery of his letter."—*Lady Brilliana Harley's Letters*, p. 18.

1556. Item—received of the gifft of Mr. Warnecombe, when we payd hym his fee .. .. xs.

„ Item—for wyne to Mr. Warncombe, p^sentyd in the Towne's name .. .. .. ijs.

„ Item—for one loff of Valent. sug^r to hym vjs.

1558. Item—paid Mr. Warncombe for his fee .. xxvjs. viijd.

1572. Item—paid to Mr. Warncombe's mynstrel at Mr. Craswell's... .. .. .. xvjd.

„ Item—paid in wyne to go to Mr. Warnecombe about the Towne's ground .. ... xvd.

1572. Item—paid at Mr. Craswell's when Mr. Warnecombe cam home from the Parlyament .. viijs.

1584. Item—paid to Mr. Warnecombe for his consaillor's fees .. .. xxvjs. viijd.

The most acceptable and most frequent of these presents was the offering of sack and of sugar. What this "sack" was has been a question in much dispute. There is every reason to believe that the use of the word was confined to the description of Spanish wines. Sack has been so often coupled with "sherry" that it has come to be considered a synonym for it, but Canary Sack and Malaga Sack are quite as true and proper as Sherries Sack. The word is not found in combination with French or Rhenish wines. Sack has been derived from "Sec," French, (dry); "Sac," German. But Brückman (A.D. 1722) gives another and more probable etymology for it. "Est vinum quoddam album, generosum, dulce, Hispanicum, sic dictum, quod in utribus, seu saccis in Hispania circumvehatur. Hispani "Secco" vocitant."—There is a certain wine, white, generous, sweet, grown in Spain, and so called, because in Spain it is conveyed in skins, or sacks. The Spaniards call it "Sack." The best, he adds, comes from the "Canaries."

Sugar had been introduced into England from Spain as early as the thirteenth century. It was, however, even at this time, a costly and scarce article, and, by reason of its price, placed beyond the reach of any but the wealthy classes. Its cost at this time was from 15d. to 20d. a pound, and as money

was then four-fold its present value, an offering of sugar was a compliment not a little appreciated by the fair women and learned men to whom it was paid by our Townsmen.

In one single account of this century we find these several entries:—

Item—For viij lbs. iij oz. of sugger that was sent to my Lady Conyngsby	vijs.	iijd.
Item—For xlbs. and a-half of sugger that was sent to Hampton Court when Sir Thos. came home..	xvs.	vjd.
Item—For ten potells of sacke which was bestowed upon the Justices	xvs.	
Item—For sugger bestowed on the justices the same time with their wyne	iiijs.	
Item—For xilbs. and a-half of sugger that was sent to Mr. Harley	xiijs.	iijd.
Item—For two potels of wine bestowed on Mr. Herbert Croft when he kept court for the halemot of Stokton	iijs.	viijd.
Item—For half a lb. of sugger bestowed on Mr. Croft at the same time		ixd.
Item—Paid for a sugger loffe to go to Sir Humpffrey Baskerville	xijs.	viijd.

There is one item in the account for 1606, which shows precisely the cost of the wine and sugar:—

Item—For xxix lbs. iij oz. of sugar at 20d. per lb.	xlviijs.	
Item—For two gallons of sacke	viijs.	
Item—For two gallons of claret	vjs.	vjd.

It must not be supposed that the Leominster of 1560, with its guilds, buildings, and hospitalities, was superior to the Leominster of 1860. The elder Town might have surpassed the younger in the union, public spirit, and greater combination of its Inhabitants for the promotion of the general good; because they had in a greater degree that which is essential to unity, a oneness of Religion; but it was by far inferior in its population, and in its cleanliness, conveniences, and comforts. In 1560, the Town had, as now, its shady side. It was surrounded

on every part by open commons, and by the swamps arising from the want of drainage for its many streams. Its only roads and means of access were horse tracks, or bridle roads, scarcely marked in the turf. Its Churchyard was void of any of those avenues of trees which now form its grace and ornament. Its Grange and Forbury were the receptacles of felled tymber, of saw-pits, of refuse heaps, and every kind of lumber. Its Corn Market was unpaved, and contained a large "myskyn,"* or refuse heap, which must have neither contributed to the appearance of the place, nor to the health of its inhabitants; while its chief streets were intersected with a large, stagnant, and uncovered ditch, which extended through the greater portion of the Town.

1558. Item—For the comyn (common) myskyn in the Corne Mrkett .. .. .. iijs. xd.
1620. Item—In charges bestowed on them that brought stones to pave the Corn Market .. vs.
1725. Aug. 28. Mem.—All timber ordered to be removed from the Forbury

The Town was amply provided with the means of administraing punishment to offenders. It had two prisons: one near the Forbury Gate, the other in Burgess Street; a whipping-post in the Corn Market; stocks and pillory,† placed in the Forbury, near the prison; and the tumbril, ducking-stool, or gum-stole.‡ These were all in constant use, and proved that the new magistrates, while they probably united mercy with justice, were not deficient in visiting on offenders the penalty of the law.

* In 1570, six persons were fined 3s. 6d. each for making of "miskells laid in the stretes;" and two others xxd. each "for not removing their tymber out of the stretes."

† The Pillory was a frame supported on two posts, and made with holes and movable boards, through which the heads and hands of criminals were put. It was covered with a small roof, as of a pent-house. It stood in the Forbury, close to the Prison, about where Mrs. Winnall's house is now built.

‡ For a full description of the Tumbril, Ducking-stool, or Gum-stole, see the latter part of this History.

1558. Item—James Mason, for putting a hook and staple in the stone wall of the prison at the Forbury Gate		xd.
„ Item—For setting the stocks in the Prison at the Forbury Gate	iijs.	iijd.
„ Item—Paid to Ricd. Trump for yerne, to making pinnes for the Stocks, and other thyngs agaynst the Assizes		xviijd.
„ Item—Paid for mending the Burgess Prison	vijs.	vjd.
„ Item—For mending the Pillory ..		iijd.
„ Item—For mending the lock of the Cage ..		vjd.
1577. Item—For reparynge the Gum-Stoole at iiij sev'al times		xviijd.
1595. Item—For tymber for repairing the Tumbril and Pillory	vijs.	vjd.
1604. Item—Paid for mending the boults, and unboulting the prisoner, and making irons for the whipping-post	js.	
1604. Item—For eleven cords for the prisoners ..		xxijd.
1606. Item—Philip Herest, for knocking on and knocking off the irons from iij prisoners; and for work done at prison	ijs.	
1608. Item—Paid for a hinge to hang the pillory door		vjd.

In A.D. 1558, in the last year of Queen Mary's reign, Sir Philip Hobby died at his house in London. He was buried* in Bysham Church, in the County of Berks, and a sumptuous monument was a few years afterwards erected to the memory of himself, and of his no less illustrious brother, by his sister-in-

* The following is the inscription on his Tomb in Bysham Church :—

"Sir Philip Hobye married Dame Eliz. daughter of Sir Walter Stonor, Knt.; and after worthy service done to his Prince and Country, died without issue 31 May 1558, being of the age of 53 years, at his house in London, and from thence was convey'd hither.

Sir Thomas Hobye married with Dame Elizh. daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, Knt., by whom he had issue four children—Edward, Eliz., Anne, and Thomas, posthumous, and being Ambassador for Queen Elizh. at Paris, died there 13 July, 1566, of the age of 36, leaving his wife great with child, in a

law, the sorrowing widow of Sir Thomas Hobby. Although he died in London, and was buried at Bysham, yet the Inhabitants of Leominster, at his death, attended a Funeral Mass, and went through all the service as if his corpse was really present. This, according to the custom of the day, was an honour paid to the memory of supposed Benefactors. The following curious statement of the charges that occurred on this occasion is found in the accounts of the Chamberlain of the Borough. A stranger might think that they referred rather to a Marriage than a Funeral.

strange country, who brought him honourably home, and built this Chapel, and laid him and his brother in one Tomb together.

Vivit post Funera Virtus.

Two worthy Knights, and Hoby both by name,
Enclosed within this marble stone doth rest;
Philip, the first, in Cæsar's Court hath fame,
Such as before few Legates like possessed.
A deep discovering head, a noble breast,
A courtier passing and a courteous Knight:
Zealous to God whose Gospel he profest.
When greatest storms gan dim the sacred Light.
A happy man whom Death hath now redeemed
From care to joy, that cannot be esteemed.
Thomas, in France, possess'd the Legate's place,
And with such wisdom grew to guide the same;
As had encreas'd great honour to his race
If sudden Fate had not envied his fame.
Firm in God's Truth, gentle and faithful Friend,
Well learned and languaged; Nature beside
Gave comely shape, which made rueful his end,
Since in his flower in Paris town he died,
Leaving with child behind his woful wife,
In foreign land opprest with heaps of grief,
From part of which when she discharged was
By fall of tears, that faithful wives do shed;
The corpse with honour brought she to this place
Performing here all due unto the dead.
That done this noble Tomb, she caused to make
And both these Brethren closed within the same;
A Memory left here for Virtue's sake
In spite of Death, to honour them with Fame.
Thus live they dead, and we learn well thereby
That Ye and We and all the World must die."

CHARGES AT THE FUNERALS OF SYR PHILIPP HOBBY, KNT.

Impr̃mis—To Sr Edmond Wolaston			vjd.
Item—For the wholl herse of tapers ..		vijs.	vjd.
Item—To the Ryngers			xd.
Item—For bread and ale to the Ryngers ..			viijd.
Item—For bread to Jon Baker			xijd.
Item—For bredd to Harry Baker		ijs.	iijd.
Item—For breadd to Richard Poull		vs.	
Item—For bread to Jon Poull, Baker ..		ijs.	
Item—For bread to Mr. Perryn			vijd.
Item—To Thomas Inglond			jd.
Item—To Mr. Poull for wyne and cakes ..			xiijd.
Sma ..		xxjs.	vjd.

A Dirge was also celebrated at Leominster at the obsequies of Queen Mary, but not with the same cost and good-will:—

1558-9.	Impr̃mis—At the Quenes Dyrge in wyne			ijs.	ivd.
	,,	,,	in ale and cakes		vijd.
	,,	,,	to the Ryngers		vjd.

In 1558-9, Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne of England. This Sovereign finds but little place in the History of Leominster. She is, however, connected with the Town by one transaction. She effected an exchange worthy to be compared with that of the ancient warriors, Glaucus and Diomed.* She compelled John Scory, Bishop of Hereford, to give up to her use the goodly Manors of Ledbury, Bishop's Upton, Ross, Bishop's Castle, Sevenhampton, Presbury, and almost all the ancient demesnes belonging to his See; and to take, in lieu of

* For Diomed's brass arms, of mean device;
For which nine oxen paid (a vulgar price),
He gave his own, of gold divinely wrought,
A hundred beeves the shining purchase bought.
Pope's Iliad, Book vi., line 292.

them, the tithes of certain Parishes. Leominster was one of these Parishes; and, through this arrangement, the Bishop of Hereford still holds the tithes here.

In 1566, Queen Elizabeth alienated from the Crown another portion of the Manor of Leominster; and sold to Sir James Croft, the Manor of Luston, on the payment of an annual rent of £98 16s. 9d.

In 1581 the Bailiff's Account contains this item:—

Warrant from Lord Burleigh and Sir Walter Mildmay to her Majesty's Woodward of Com: Hereford, to sell to the Corporation certain Trees in Redwood,* and other woods, for which it had petitioned, for re-edifying a Schoolhouse and Gaol in the same town of Leominster.

[Receipt of £5 from Woodward annexed.]

A curious circumstance is mentioned in an ancient Roll, in the possession of the late Mrs. Davies, of Croft Castle:—

"In 1594, a great barne in Lempster fired by a comett, and burned 15 dayes."†

These items occur in the Chamberlain's Accounts of this reign:—

1558. Item—paid to the glazier for xx^ty foote of glass, and for nayles to sett it up .. .. xiijs. vijd.

1572. Item—payd to the Wayes of Herefford for playeing at the Henne feast .. .. xijd.

[This feast was an entertainment given at Christmas by the Bailiff for the time being, and paid for by the "Hen-money." Each lease granted by the Corporation contained a clause for the payment of 2 fat hens at Christmas to the Bailiff: or, in lieu thereof, hen-money to the amount of 1s. 6d.]—The "Wayes" were the Waits.

* This wood is mentioned in the various grants of the Manor:—

"And of all that wood called Redwood, within the said Manor of Stockton, conteyning by estimacon xl Acres and of the Herbage and pannage of the seid wood menconed to be of the yearly rent or value of xxs."

This Wood is situated near the Raddlebank, and is the property of Mr. Arkwright, as owner of the old Manor of Leominster.

† Wright's "History of Ludlow," p. 495.

1572. Item—at Robert Stubbes, for a drynkyng at my Lady Croft's cōmyng home.. .. viijs. vjd.

1586. Imprimis—fyve yards of grey frise to the Beddle to make him coote and hose .. iijs. vd.

„ Item—for half a quarter of crymson Kersey and jd. of Red thred for the Beddle's coote .. vijd.

„ Item—paid for the Subsidy money, out of the Chamber .. .. viijs.

„ Item—six yards and three quarters of brod cloth to make the S^rgents' gowns .. .. lviijs. iiijd.

1588 Item—to the Ryngers that range upon Tuesday, the xix of November, 1588, beinge a day appoynted by her Maj^tie to be solempnized for the late Victorye uppon the Seas against the Spanyards .. .. .. ijs. vjd.

[The memorable day of the defeat of the Armada was the 29th of July, 1588.]

1589. Item—P^d to the Stewarde of the Quest of enquiry for eating flesh in Lent .. .. ijs.

In A.D. 1605, James I. gave, on his accession, a renewal of the Charter, which contained these words:—"Whereas from that time (A.D. 1554) until now, the Borough and Town aforesaid has in a wonderful manner been growing and flourishing, as well in wealth as in population, and yet doth flourish: We, intending the better sale and dispersion of the fine wool*

* The Wool of Leominster was, in the time of James I., at the height of its fame. Camden, in his "Britannia," vol. i., p. 690, thus speaks of it:—"The greatest name and fame that it hath this day, is of the wooll in the territories round about it. Lemster Ore, they call it, which, setting aside that of Apulia and Tarentum, all Europe counteth it to be the very best." It affords, also, a fruitful source of allusion to the Poets. Drayton, in his "Polyolbion," or "Description of England," published in 1613, speaks thus rapturously of the wool of Leominster:—

Lug little Oney first, then Arro in doth take,
At Lemster, for her wool whose staple does excel,
And seems to over-match the golden Phrygian fell.
Had this our Colchos been unto the ancients known,
When Honour was herself, and in her glory shone,
He then that did command the infantry of Greece
Had only to our isle adventured for this fleece.

produced in that neighbourhood into different parts of our kingdom, and being persuaded that the assemblye of buyers and sellers of that commoditie there may be a great encouragement of the woollen manufacture in this kingdom, do grant to the Bailiff, &c. to keep one other fair on the Feast of Saint Bartholomew, (August 24th), or on the morrow of that day."

"In 1610, the pestilence being at Hereford, the Summer Assizes were held at Leominster; where Roger Cadwallader,* a Secular Priest, was condemned for taking orders beyond sea, drawn, hanged, and quartered on the 19th of August. His quarters were hanged up at the four ends of the Town, and his head at the Market Place: and the tradition is, that the Car-

> Where lives the man so dull, on Britain's farthest shore,
> To whom did never sound the name of Lemster ore?
> That with the silk-worm's thread for fineness doth compare,
> Wherein the winder shows his workmanship so rare
> As doth the fleece excel, and mocks her looser clew;
> As neatly bottomed up as Nature forth it drew:
> Of each in high'st account, and reckon'd here as fine,
> As there th' Apulian fleece or dainty Tarentine.

John Oldham, who wrote some fifty years after Drayton, makes this reference to the famous staple of Leominster:—

> "Not the soft flocks on hilly Cotswold fed,
> Nor Lempster fields with living fleeces clad."
> Paraphrase on Horace, Book I., Ode 31.

It was the mart of the neighbourhood for wool. Thus, Lady Brilliana Harley, in her "Letters" (p. 6) says, "Pinner shall send some woole to Lemster."

* Roger Cadwallader was born at Stretton by Sugwas. He attended a school at home till he was fit to go to College. He then became a student at the English College at Rhoims, and was made Deacon in 1592: that year he travelled into Spain to the English College at Valladolid in order to finish his studies—was made a Priest, and returned home. He was apprehended on Easter Day, 1610, at the house of Mrs. Winifred Scroop, within eight miles of Hereford, by James Pritchard, the Under-Sheriff. He was first brought to the High Sheriff: then to Bennet, Bishop of the Diocese, and underwent a long examination. Being proved a (Roman) Catholic Priest, he was sent to prison, and condemned to the usual punishment of those times. He was offered pardon if he would take the Oath of Allegiance, which he refused.—Price's History, p. 61.

penter who made the Gallows was afterwards, for some crime, hanged upon it himself."*

In 1613, King James I. visited this county, and, as the guest of Mr. Serjeant Hoskyns, at Morehampton, witnessed the oft-celebrated Morris dance, in which 10 persons danced whose ages amounted to 1,000 years. One of these, Frank Wigley, was reputed to have been 132 years old. The Author has been favoured with the copy of an autograph letter of Serjeant Hoskyns, contained in the collection of the late Revd. Thomas Bird, of Mordiford. It shows the condition of the country at this time, and gives a singularly interesting account of the impediments and dangers of travelling in those days. Where "hedges were to be broken through for roads,' even a Royal progress must have been a work of no little labour and difficulty!

LETTER FROM SERJEANT HOSKYNS.

DEC. 10, 1627.

"Pray God to bless us and yourselves. I think the matter will be so far settled to-morrow that we shall need no other help than God's blessing, which is drawn down by the prayers of those that fear Him.

Provide all things as well as you can: if it please God we will be at Ross on Friday night. Thither must be brought some good coach with four horses, for I know not how we shall procede further. We are in hope of my Lady Cornwall's† coach for part of the way. I had brought one down from London had not a foolish report caused a doubtful letter to be written to me, but now I will cut off all possabilitye of rumors, and therefore I must

* Blount's MS. Notes.

† This was probably Katherine, daughter of John Harley, of Brampton Bryan Castle, widow of Mr. Cressett, of Upton Cresset, who married Thomas Cornwall, Baron of Burford. He also died in 1615; so that she would have been again a widow.

make sudden provision. Sir Saml. Aubrey,* Mrs. Candish, Sir Giles Brydges,† and every friend must be tried. My sister Kempe hath a good coach, so hath my Lady Bodenham, but who hath horses? If any one knows of any noble gentleman that now would furnish me, I would truly requite him, and in such a case never troble friend more, if it please God; and be ever hereafter able to do the like for another. We have somewhat to do, and I cannot write much. Commend me to Mr. Howarth,‡ tell him if he can help us it shall be a worthy friendship. There must be horses sent to Oxford to be there on St. Thomas' Eve to bring down W^m. and Bennet Hoskyns. They mean to keep Crismas with us. There must be a Hogshead of Sacke from Monmouth or Hereford to walke with our coach. Take care for the coach horses to be had at this time, and go presently about it day and night: the rest we have more time to do. Study the coach way; where to *break* hedges, and how to avoid deep and dangerous ways; so God speede you.

J. HOSKYNS.

Mistake me not—no man resisteth me. We want nothing but coach and horses.

To Mrs. Bourne,§
at Morehampton, in the Golden Vale.

In 1618, Sir Thomas Conyngsby gave two Maces and a Halberd to the Corporation. These Maces were superseded by the more costly present of those now in use, by his descendant,

* Sir Samuel Aubrey represented an old County family, who in the last century were known as the Aubreys of Clehonger.

† Sir Giles Brydges was created a Baronet, May 17th, 1627. He lived at Wilton Castle, near Ross; and would be thus well situated to afford help on his route, which would be through Oxford and Worcester.

‡ Mr. Howarth was a neighbour, residing at the White House, near Tournaston. The last of the family was a daughter, who married a Mr. Wood of Leominster, whose son now lives there. The Morehampton Estate was sold by the present Sir H. Hoskyns.

§ Mrs. Bourne was the Housekeeper of Mr. Serjeant Hoskyns.

The Halberd, given by Sir T. Conyngsby.

Earl Conyngsby. The Halberd was formerly carried by the Chamberlain on state occasions, but has been discontinued since the Reform Bill of 1834. Sir Thomas Conyngsby* was for many years the farmer of, and the head bailiff over, all the Crown lands in the County of Hereford and the Marches. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, and he founded the Conyngsby Hospital at Hereford. This amusing story is handed down concerning him, in some MSS. notes of Mr. Auditor Harley, in the possession of the Lady Frances Harcourt. "Sir Thomas Conyngsby, who was as great a humourist as any of his age, was the prototype and model of Sir Puntarvolo,† in Ben Jonson's Play of "Every Man out of his Humour." The players took so much pains to hit him right, and to act him exactly, that they came down on purpose to Sir Thomas's seat at Hampton Court, in Herefordshire, under pretence of acting before him; and they got a very remarkable suit of clothes of his by a stratagem. When all the company was seated, and expected the play to begin, a message was sent from the players to Sir Thomas to tell him that the players could not act for want of a shape: upon which he ordered that the ingenious gentlemen should be carried into the wardrobe, and choose what they liked best. They chose the suit they wanted. They afterwards acted the play in London, and Sir Punto was dressed in this suit of clothes, and Sir Thomas being present, in the midst of the play stood up, and

* Fitzwilliam Conynsby, the son of Sir Thomas, bravely defended Hereford for Charles I., and lost his estates by order of the Parliament.

† "PUNTARVOLO. A vain-glorious knight, over-Englishing his Travels, and wholly consecrated to singularity; the very Jacob's staff of complement: a Sir that has liv'd to see the revolution of Time on most of his apparel. Of preface good enough, but so palpable affected to his own praise, that (for want of flatterers) he commends himself, to the floutage of his own family. He deals upon returns, and strange performances, resolving (in despight of publick derision) to stick to his own particular Fashion, Phrase, and Gesture."

said—"Am I Sir Thomas Conyngsby, or is that Sir Thomas Conyngsby?"

In 1620, King James I. granted the whole Manor of Leominster, with all its ancient rights, possessions, and privileges to the first Marquis, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, on the consideration of his paying annually into the Exchequer £305 11s. 5d. The possessions and rentals are so accurately set forth in the Accounts made to Henry VIII. and to Queen Elizabeth by their respective bailiffs, in the Grant to the Marquis of Buckingham, and in the Return made in compliance with an order of the Parliament during the Commonwealth; that every fractional part and parcel of the Manor is described. The Manor included lands and rents in the Parishes of Leominster, Stoke, Ivington, Hope, Farlowe, Westharness,* Cholstrey, Hyde, Bradford, Stockton, Brimfield, Middleton, and Kimbolton.

There are two curious items mentioned in the Grant made to the Marquis of Buckingham. The one is the collection of some small rents in Ivington called "Honey Silver"—

"Et de ijs. vjd. de redd. in Ivington voc. 'Honi-silver.'"

The other is the mention of a street in Leominster; of which no other notice has come to the knowledge of the Author:—

"Also the whole of that tenement, and the whole of that garden, situate and being in "Smyth Street," in Leompster aforesaid."†

In 1634—"The Market House, which they call the Crosse, was built. Most of the gentlemen's armes on this side the County being set round it, as having been contributors to the charge."‡

* Westharness is a Liberty rather than a place, and embraces a portion of the Town of Leominster, with parts of two or three outlying Townships.

† "Necnon totum illud tenementum ac tot. ill. hort. situat. et existent. in 'Smyth Streete' in Leompster prædict."—Original Grant to the Marquis of Buckingham.

‡ Blount, MS. Notes.

The Town of Leominster at this period, as at other times, reflected the public feeling of the day. The Liberty of prophesying, as it was called, i.e. the License commenced by Archbishop Grindal; and granted to certain ordained Clergymen to itinerate about the country, and to preach in the Dioceses, with the sanction of the respective Bishops, had at this time degenerated into an abuse. The whole country, but more especially the provincial Towns, were overrun with "strange preachers," who went from place to place in discharge of their vocation. "It was high time," says Fuller,* "to apply some cure to the pulpits, as sick of a sermon surfeit, and other exorbitances. Some meddled with State matters; and, generally, by an improper transposition, the people's duty was preached to the king at court—the king's to the people in the country. Many shallow preachers handled the profound points of Predestination; wherein, pretending to guide their flocks, they lost themselves. Sermons were turned into satires against Papists, or Nonconformists. To repress the present, and prevent future mischiefs in this kind, his Majesty issued out his Directions."

The Churchwardens' accounts attest that the Town of Leominster encouraged the visits of these strange preachers.

1604.	Item—Paid to Mr. Jackbus the Preacher..	vs.	
„	Item—Paid to Mr. Tuxford the Preacher..	iijs.	ivd.
1613.	Item—Paid to a strange Preacher by the consent of Mr. Bailyff	vjs.	viijd.
1619.	Paid for entertaining of a strange Preacher, Mr. Dew, at his first coming, in the presence of Mr. Bailiff, and others of the Companye ...	4s.	
„	Paid for his entertainment these two times in the presence of Mr. Bailiff and others ..	5s.	6d.
„	Item—paid to Mr. Bailiffe, for the entertainynge of the Lecturers ... ..2*l.*	10s.	0d.

* Fuller's Church History, Book x, Cent. xvii, Section 9.—
The Canons of the Church, passed in 1604, contain frequent allusions to these Strange Preachers, and show that they were "a distinct class from, and a source of frequent annoyance and heartburning to, their Brethren in the Ministry."—See Canons from XLIV to LVII.

1619.	Item—paid to Mr. Philip Bande for a quarter's diet for the Lecturers, and for horse meat unto this time	3*l.*	10s. 0d.
1621.	Item—to Philip Bande for entertaining the Preachers the first halfe year	5*l.*	0s. 0d.
1624.	Item—paid Mr. Viner the Lecturer ...	10*l.*	0s. 0d.
„	Item—paid to a strange Preacher that preached the 25th day of July		ijs.
„	Item—paid to Mr. Jones, a strange Preacher, in November*		iijs. iiijd.

The large half-yearly payments for the entertainment of the Lecturers disappear from the accounts in 1624, and from that date become concentrated in one payment of £10 per annum to a Mr. Vyner, who was, perhaps, in obedience to the King's directions, appointed at this time the recognised Lecturer in the Parish Church. The visits of Strange Preachers are still occasionally mentioned in the Accounts: but, from this date, they become "like Angel visits, few and far between."

The Bailiffs and Burgesses of Leominster, in the face of their occasional entertainment of Strange Preachers, were no Puritans. They were neither disloyal to the Throne, nor unfaithful to the Church. While they listened to Mr. Dew, or Mr. Jackbus, or

* The County of Hereford was singularly deficient in preaching Ministers. We have this testimony from one, Rowland Vaughan, Esq., a gentleman resident in the County in 1610. "I am," he writes, "no Papist, nor Puritan, but a true Protestant, according to the King's injunctions: and where the Puritans babble against one Minister to have two Livings, lett the Superintendent of them, with some of their purifyed number, come to the Hundred I dwell in, which is Weobtree (Weobley). I will shew them foure-and-twenty Parishes, not any one of all able to maintain a Preaching Minister." Rowland Vaughan lived in the Golden Vale. He printed a small Treatise, entitled—"Most Approved, and Long-Experienced Waterworks;" in which he proposes a system of artificial irrigation, to make the fields, "especially if they be dryo, more fertile—Ten for One." His method has been largely adopted since: and the early attention to this matter by an Inhabitant of Herefordshire is a credit to the County. Mr. Parker, Bookseller at Hereford, has a copy of this Treatise, and, by his permission, the Author has made the above Extracts.

Mr. Tuxford, they were not animated by a morose or bitter spirit; but were a social, friendly, and open-hearted community. They were generous in their presents, hospitable in their feasts, liberal in their general expenditure, and the willing patrons of the amusements and social gatherings of the day. These following payments, in the Chamberlain's Books, bear evidence to these elements in their character:—

1618. Item—for the Banquet to the Lord President .. .. .. £iij xs.

1622. Wynes bestowed on the Lord President xxxiijs. viijd.

The Chamberlain's account, on one occasion, gives the particulars of the charges incurred on the visit of a Lord President.

Imprimis—Paide for 2 potles of burnt sacke ..	vs.	iiijd.
„ more for 2 potles of burnt claret ..	iiijs.	
„ more for 2 potles of sacke	iiijs.	
„ more for 1 potle of claret	iijs.	iiijd.
„ more for 1 potle of white wyne ..		xxd.
„ more for beere		viijd.
„ more for cake		iiijd.
„ more one gallon of sacke	iiijs.	
„ more two gallons of claret	vjs.	viijd.
„ more one quart of sacke		xiid.
„ more gave to the ryngers that did ringe upon the Lo: President cūmyng into the Towne	ijs.	
„ more payde for a quart of sacke before the Lord President cam		xijd.

Several instances of these presents occur in the Chamberlain's accounts, of which these examples will suffice:—

The Present sent to Eardisley.

Imprimis—paide to John Stead for a peèce of beef	xvjs.	
„ more paide to John Walton for wyne	vijs.	vjd.
„ more paide to Mr. Blathfield for wyne	iiijs.	viijd.

„ more gave to the officers in Sir Humphrey Baskerville's* howse .. .. viijs. vjd.

„ more paide to Woodfield for carying the seid present to Eardisley .. .. ijs.

1619. Itm—to Mr. Stead for a calf at Christmas, sent to Hampton† .. .. .. xxs.

1618. Itm—To the Erle of Derbye's Players vs.

„ To the Lady Elizabethe's Players xs.

„ Erle of Sussex's Players .. vs.

„ To the Queen's Players .. vs.

1620. Itm—To the King of Bohemya's his Players .. .. xs.

These last payments made to Players require a passing illustration. It was the custom at this period for the King, Queen, Princes, Princesses, and higher Nobles, to have Companies of Players in their service, and licensed by the authority of the Lord Chamberlain,‡ or by the express warrant of the Lord Privy Seal, to enrol themselves under their name, and to form as it were a part of their respective Households. These Players received certain annual payments from their Patrons, and per-

* Sir Fastidious Frisk, in Ben Jonson's play, "Every Man out of his Humour," was intended to represent Sir Humphrey Baskerville, Son-in-Law to Sir Thomas Conyngsby.—MS. Notes by Mr. Auditor Harley, in the Collection of Lady Frances Harcourt.

† The presents of sack and sugar, already referred to, still continue to be given on a liberal scale.

1618. Itm—for sugar and wyne sent to Sir Thomas Conyngsby, Sir Humfrey Baskerville, and Mrs. Conyngsby, at Christmas .. .. £iiij vijs. vijd.

„ Itm—Paid to the officers at Hampton Court .. xiijs. vjd.

[This was probably a payment to the Servants, after an Entertainment at Hampton Court.]

‡ The origin of the present Licenses to Players, and their subjection to the control of the Lord Chamberlain of the Royal Household is, that they were originally a part of the family or retinue of the King, or Queen, or Noblemen, by whom they were maintained, and that they only played in Public by an especial License or permission from their Patrons:—

"Your Honour's players, hearing your amendment,
Are come to play a pleasant comedy."

Induction to "Taming of a Shrew."

formed before them at the greater festivals, or at their more costly and courtly entertainments. At other times they performed at some one of the Theatres in London; or travelled* about the country, and visited different Provincial Towns. They still bore the name or title of the distinguished persons in whose pay they were; and the various Corporations encouraged and patronised them on the occasion of their coming to their Town, not only as affording gratification to their Townspeople, but because the not employing them would be regarded as a slight to the Prince or Noblemen of whose household they formed a part. King James the First was a zealous patron of the stage. His Players accompanied him on several Royal progresses. The Lady Elizabeth, whose Players performed at Leominster, was the eldest daughter of James I. She married, in 1613, Frederick V., the celebrated Elector Palatine. He became, in 1620, King of Bohemia; and it is probable that on this occasion the Players, hitherto enrolled as those of the Princess Elizabeth, were henceforth known under the new title of the King of Bohemia's Players.

These Players were sometimes local; and in these cases the Company would be formed of the young apprentices, who were qualifying themselves for admission to the various guilds or fraternities of tradesmen in the Town. The plays acted by these youths, the younger members of the various guilds, were a medley of Tragedy and Comedy; partly allied to the old sacred plays or mysteries, and partly occupied with the addresses, speeches, and interpellations of the more formal plays as perfected by Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, and their contemporaries.†

* HAM. What players are they?

ROS. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the Tragedians of the city.

HAM. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.—Hamlet, Act II., Scene 2.

† These plays may possibly be alluded to under the two last terms of this description:—"The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral."—Hamlet, Act II., Scene 2.

It is satisfactory to observe, that the Bailiff and his Company were most liberal in their largesses to their own Townsmen.

It^{m}—To the Players of the Towne, by the Bayliffe, his appoyntement	xxs.
It^{m}—To the Youths of Leominster	xs.

The Bailiff at this period gave, four times a-year, his Court, or "Munday Dinners." This petition continually occurs at the end of their annual statement of accounts:—

"The Accomptant prayeth allowance according to ancient order for his Court Dynners, £10."

Other items in the Churchwardens' accounts: the large sums expended in bread and wine for the communicants; the voluntary provision for the daily service; the ample supply of all things requisite for the perfect sustentation of the Parish Church;* the enquiry after Recusants by those in authority: the observance of the King's holidays; the rejoicings at the events promoting the happiness of the Royal Family, unite, with the large hospitality, and the recompence to Players, to prove that the Inhabitants of Leominster at this time were good men and true, loyal citizens, and staunch churchmen.

1608.	It^{m}—Paid for the new Bible ..	£ij	vijs.	viijd.
1611.	It^{m}—Mr. Suftrall's charges, and Thos Pychards for two daies at Bromiard, when they were for concerning the Recusants		iiijs.	
„	It^{m}—delivered to the Town for the redeemyng of certaine Chrystians out of captivitie from ye Turke		xxs.	
1613.	It^{m}—paide to Christopher Wellow for makeinge the Chimes to goe	£2	0s.	0d.

* This Memorandum is entered in the Vestry Book for 1620:—

"The Parishioners did agree and consent together that the sum of xxxlib. should be assessed and leavied for the reparation of the Church aforesaid; and other necessaryes belonging thereunto."

Forty-eight names are attached, of which "Mr. Bailiff." "Mr. Justice," and "Mr. Vicar" (in this order) stand the first.

1617. It^m—paid to the Ringers for ringing on the Kinge's holidaies .. .. vijs. vjd.

1619. It^m—bestowed on a maymed souldier to helpe him to his own countrie .. ijs.

1624. It^m—paid for bread and wine for the Communion .. .. ..£iiij vijs. ijd.

„ It^m—paid for Ringinge the happie day of the Prynce's comynge into England.. xiid.

[This was the return of Prince Charles from his romantic journey to Spain with the Duke of Buckingham, to see the Infanta—October 5th. He arrived at Portsmouth, and the next day came to London, to the great rejoicing of all sorts of people, signifyed by their bon-fires, ringing of bells, with other expressions of joy.]—"Fuller's Church History," sub anno, 1623.

1624. It^m—paid the Minister that did help Mr. Vicar upon Easter Day to administer the Sacrament .. .. .. iijs. iiijd.

„ It^m—paid Mr. Viner for helping Mr. Vicar on Low Easter Sunday .. ijs.

„ It^m—paid to the Constables on Assension Day .. .. vjs. viijd.

[This payment was for beating the bounds of the Parish. It occurs, without intermission, to the date of the Reform Bill, 1834.]

1626. Item—paid for vj dinners at the Court called before the Justices concerning Recusants .. .. .. 8s. 4d.

„ Item—paid the painter for making the Kinge's Armes .. .. .. £1 8s. 4d.

1630. Item—for ringing for the birth of the Prince, at Mr. Bailiff's command .. 4s. 0d.

„ Item—to Mr. Jennings, for candles to read Morning Prayer .. .. 6s. 8d.

„ Item—paid towards the maymed soldiers, Kyng's Benche, and Marshalsey.. £1 14s. 8d.

„ Item—for the singers onthe Rogation Days .. .. 1s. 0d.

[These accompanied the Constables in beating the bounds of the Parish, and sang Psalms and Anthems at certain points of their progress.]

1634. Item—for viij ells and j yarde of Hollande to make the Sirples .. .. £1 10s. 0d.

1634. Item—for makynge the new Sirples .. 7s. 0d.

1640. Item—for a new carpet for the Chamber 14s. 0d.

[Previous to this date the Chamber had been strewn with rushes, which occur as an annual charge in the Chamberlain's Accounts.]

The Author has purposely made, in this Chapter, copious Extracts from the Accounts of the Chamberlains and the Parish Churchwardens. He cannot but think that, from these sources, are obtained the best illustrations of the manners and customs of the times past. He trusts that the following transcripts from the Minute Book of the Corporation at this period will be acceptable to his readers.

DIVERSE EXTRACTS FROM MINUTE BOOKS OF CORPORATION.

A.D. 1618. Item—Whereas divers of the Capitall Burgesses at ye tyme of their assemblies meeting and consultacions in the said Councell Chamber have and do use to disorder themselves by removing out of their orderlie seat and place in the said Chamber; and also in walkinge and talkeinge and not in doing their dilligence nor givinge attentive eare unto the matters and things ther comoned of to the great hinderance of the good and forward proceedings of the Chamber and Councell—THEREFORE, it is nowe ordered, and decreed, that none of the said Capitall Burgesses shall hereafter use anie such disorder, but shall continue and site in their said orderlie place within the said Chamber, and shall not walke or talke to the disturbance of the said Chamber and companie assembled but orderlie and attentively shall use and behave themselves duringe all the tyme that anie matter shall be spoken, or hereafter to be comoned of, on paine of xijd. on anie person herein offending to be levied and paid as is before prescribed.

Item—It is agreed and ordered that no forener shall be admitted or elected to the office of a Burgess of the Parliament by the voices of the Capital Burgesses, if anie of the said Capital Burgesses will at any time take on them the said office.*

[Repealed 8th of April, 1687.]

* See "Lectures on Customs of Hereford," by Richard Johnson, Town Clerk, p. 62.

Item—It is ordered and agreed that none of the Capital Burgesses of this Borough shall be Reteyner or Reteyners to any gent or man of Worshipp by wearinge of anie lyvery or lyveries* of anie Lord, Knyhte, or Squier or other gentelman duringe the tyme that he shall be a Capitall Burgess of the said Borough, upon paine to forfeit to the chest of the Chamber of the said Borough (anie person in defaulte for anie default) not onlie the some of fyve pounds to be levied of his goods and cattals imediatelie after the farte comitted, by the Chamberlaine of the said Borough, for the tyme beinge, but also to be expulsed and diffranchised of his said Capital Burgesship.

Item—It is enacted and ordered that whosoever shall be received and sworn into the company as one of the Capital Burgesses shall within three months next after his being sworn, kepe his dynner, or breakfast for the company upon the pain of £10; and that everie one of the Capital Burgesses shall be at the Lawday, and faire dayes in a gowne, except it raine or snowe, or be foule weather, upon pain of xs. to be levied by distress as in former orders is lymitted, and to be bestowed upon and towards the reparation of high wayes and bridges within this Borough. In Cameram hoc die Sabbati (Saturday) 23 die Januarii 1634.

Confirmed 30th September, 1686.

Mem.—At a Chamber holden xxviii of June 1634 it was discussed and agreed, that a forren Burgesses' daughter cannot make her husband free: in casu Christopheri Rowbery clamantis in re uxōr suæ filiæ Johannis Cocks de Middleton.

Item—It is agreed and ordered that none of the brethren of the Corporation shall repaier or sitt in the Courte Lawdaie or Chamber at anie tyme of assemblie without anie gown or cloke

* A Statute passed A.D. 1377, 1st year of Rich. II., seems to give the best commentary on this order of the Burgesses:—

"Because that divers people of small revenue of land, rent, or other possessions do make great retinue of people, as well of Esquires as of other, in many parts of the realm, giving to them hats, and other liveries, as one suit by year, taking of them the value of such livery, or percase the double value, by such covenant and assurance, that every one of them shall maintain other in all quarrels, be they reasonable, or unreasonable, to the great mischief and oppression of the people. It is ordained and assented, that henceforth no such livery be given to any man for maintenance of quarrels, nor other confederacies, upon pain of imprisonment, and grievous forfeiture to the King."

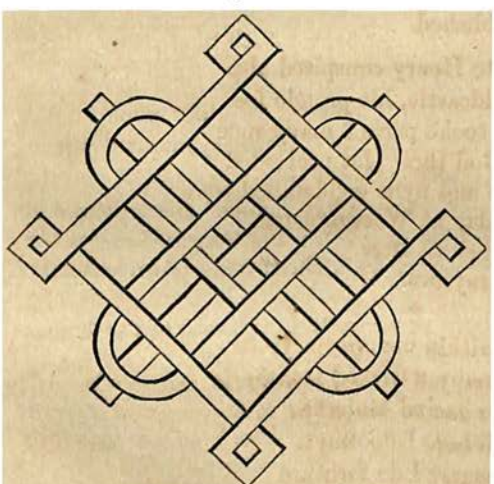
on his and their back under the paine of iijs. iiijd; any one making default for every time that they shall offend in this behalf to be paid and leveied as is before written in former articles.

Confirmed.

Item—It is ordered and agreed that at any Lawdaie to be houlden wtin this Borough that the whole brethren of the Corporation shall repaier unto the Bailiff's House, and in decente and comelie order accompanye him from thence to the Courte House, and from thence bringe him whome again in like order, on paine of any man in defaulte of iijs. iiijd., unless he shall be licenced by the Bailiff. To be leveied and paid as is aforesaid.

Confirmed.

The Bailiff and Capital Burgesses were a united and loving body. The terms used in their Official Minutes:—"The whole Brethren of this Corporation"—"The Bailiff and others of his Company"—implied that the duty was incumbent on them of being actuated by those sentiments of confraternity and good feeling which should always prevail in public bodies associated for the general welfare. The ancient "Knot"* of the Corporation shows, also, that they were really animated with a desire to consider themselves as Brethren, and to act in the spirit of their original Charter, as "one body corporate in thing, deed, and name, and one community for ever." This knot was found on the back of an ancient lease of the Corporation, with



THE CORPORATION KNOT.

* This knot and its accompanying poetry were communicated to the Author by the late respected Mr. F. Harris, of Leominster.

these lines written beneath it; some portion of which, unfortunately, could not be deciphered:

Thus as this knot is knit so should your hearts
Which neither force, nor blusterous tempest parts,
Be knit * * *
* * * *

" As ye are Brothers of one Corporation,
So live as one in love or detestation.
Ye are one Body Corporate by Royal done:
One tongue, one voice ye should have, and but one:
One God, One faith ye all confess, and should
For common good, one Oath receive and hold."

A Poem in the hand-writing of James I.'s reign is written on the back of a Parchment Roll of the Court Leet of the Borough, for the year 1631, during the Bailiwick of Roland Stead. It is of considerable length, and appears to be a description of the various rebellions that occurred in England. A short specimen will be interesting, as the production of a native poet, and as never before published.

" 'Gainst fifte Henry conspired also
Sr John Oldcastlē, his proude foe
With him tooke parte a many mōe
But God their plot prevented:
Threescore and nyne condemned were
Upon one day at Westmynster
And executed all after
Like traytors.
* * *

" Here was within our memorye
Wrought many a wicked treacherie
Against her sacred Majestye
Which here I do omyt.
And to rehearse I do forbeare
The Develish plots intended were
Against our noble Kinge elsewhere
Most closelye.
* * *

"Would rebells note how Rebells fare
Unto their soules they would have care
For God did never Rebells spare
But hateth their devises.
Thinke they that He slumbers or sleepes?
No! let them know He Israel keepes
And from his wheate the chaffe He swepes
To burne it.

"Great Britaine! like a Mother deare
Nurture thie chyldren in true feare
Of God, and his Anoynted here
King James ō^{r} Royall Kinge!
Thie people shall with one voice sing
Hosanna to highe Heaven's Kinge
And pray God still to save the Kinge
Queen, Prince, and Realme."

The Inhabitants of Leominster, during the reign of Charles I., were warm partisans of the King, and firm adherents to the throne. They exhibited a true loyalty; not only rendering their allegiance in the day of prosperity, but rallying round the Crown, when it hung on a bush, and proving themselves in the hour of calamity and trial, to be good men and true—

"As true as dial to the sun;
Although it be not shone upon."

In 1641, two events occurred, which afford the strongest testimony to the Royalist tendencies of "the Men of Leominster." They attacked and drove out of the Town some Parliamenterian soldiers. Lady Brilliana Harley gives this account:—"The soulders from Heariford were at Lemster last thursday on theaire marche to theaire rendeuoues; the captaine not paying them all theare pay, they would haue returned into the towne againe, but all the towne rose, and thos that weare come out of chruch, and with thos arms they had, beate them back, but theare being a greate heape of stones out of toune, the soulders made vse of them as long as they lasted, in which time the townesmin did

but littell good, till that powder was spent, and then the townesmen weare to hard; many weare hurt on both sides; the captaine would haue come into the towne, but was keep out."* The Townspeople also rose up against, and drove out, the Vicar of the Parish, the Rev. J. Tombes, on account of his Parliamenterian and Puritan opinions. The Sermon which chiefly gave offence to the Parishioners was preached the 14th of November, 1641, on the text, Matthew xv., 9, and was entitled, "Pharisaical Wil-worship." It was afterwards printed, for general distribution, by an order of the House of Commons. "It is this nineteenth day of Aprill, Anno Dom: 1643 Ordered by the Committee of the House of Commons in Parliament, concerning Printing, that this Book intituled (the Leaven of Pharisaicall Wil-Worship) be Printed." Mr. Tombes himself attributes his expulsion by his Parishioners to this sermon, in his Dedication of it, to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs of Bristol, to which city he retired:—"A hope somewhat to abate this fire of rage, moved me at first to cast this bucket of water to quench it. But as it happens often, that when water quencheth not a fire, it flames out the more by casting water on it: so it befell me: the barbarous rage and impetuous violence of people so increased, that I could have no safety in my proper station, but was enforced to remove myself, wife and children, and since have suffered the spoyling of my goods, of my dwelling house, with many other injuries. I have in your city cast anchor, till either a greater storm enforce me to commit myself to the main again, or a favourable gale bring me into harbour."

In 1643, Sir William Waller, the Parliamenterian general in the West, having taken Hereford by a surprise on Monday, April 24th, obtained, within three days, possession of Leominster. This account of the capture of the Town was transmitted to the Parliament:†—"Sir William Waller, after taking

* Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley; edited by the Rev. T. T. Lewis, p. 98.

† See Vicar's Parliamentary Chronicle, p. 348; Webb's Introduction to the Bibliotheca Gloucestriensis, p. xxxix.

of Hereford went to Leominster, a very malignant town, but a place of great consequence, and very rich; and having taken that town, and spent some time in disarming the malignants,* and placed a proper garrison there, he departed." Sir William Waller did not long reap the fruits of his victory. He scoured the country, to the very gates of Worcester, but having there met with a severe and unexpected repulse, he retired to Reading. The County of Hereford, with its Towns, again re-established the authority of the Sovereign.

In 1645, this part of England became the actual theatre† of the contest between the King and the Parliament. The City of Hereford was besieged for the space of two months by the Scots under the Earl of Leven. Its inhabitants made as noble a defence as any recorded in this sad episode of our national history: and on the second day of September, on the approach of the King at the head of the royal army, the Scottish leaguers suddenly broke up their camp, and departed. In the Autumn of this year, Charles the First, on two separate occasions, visited the Town of Leominster, and thus gave an honourable testimony to the royalty and devotion of its Inhabitants.

The "Iter Carolinum,"‡ written by a daily attendant on the King, contains these entries:—

* The term Malignants was applied in reproach to the "Royalists." They returned the compliment by calling their opponents "Roundheads" and "Cropeared."

"Religion in their garments, and their hair
Cut shorter than their eyebrows!"—

Prologue to Every Man out of his Humour.

† These Extracts from the Diary of Richard Symonds, an Officer present with the King's army, show that Leominster was at this period the very theatre of the movements of the forces of the King and of the Parliament.

"Points his horse about 2,000, was come to Lemster."

"Wednesday, Sept. 17.—This day the nearest enemy (and whose buisiness it was to attend the King's motion) viz. Points and Rossiter's horse were about Lemster, com. Hereford."

‡ ITER CAROLINUM—being a succinct relation of the necessitated marches, retreats, and sufferings of his Majesty Charles I., from Jan. 10, 1641, till the time of his death, 1648; collected by a daily attendant upon his Sacred Majesty, during all the said time.—John Manley.

September, 1645.	Days.	Distance.
Wednesday, 3rd—Bromyard—Mr. Baynham's ..	I	X
Thursday, 4th—To Hereford—dined at Bp's Palace	I	X
Friday, 5th—To Lempster—Dinner at the Unicorn. To Weobley—supper. The Unicorn.	I	XIV

The Unicorn Inn at Leominster is now a shop in the Broad Street, in the occupation of Mr. Josiah Newman. The other chief Inn, at this time, was the Crown, which stood in Broad Street, nearly opposite to the Unicorn, and was approached by six steps, and had a narrow entrance of wainscot.

1609. Item—paid for 6 Dynners at the Crowne by Mr. Bailiff's appointment, and others of the Company .. .. xvijs. vjd.

1640. Item—paid for wine and beare by Mr. Edgar and his company at the Crowne .. xvjd.

The Unicorn Inn at Weobley, had its name changed to the Crown, in honour of Charles I.'s visit, and is now a private house, inhabited by Mr. Palmer, Surgeon of that place. The King would, no doubt, be reminded on this occasion of the old Proverb, once common in these parts:—"Lempster bread, and Weobley ale."*

The "Iter Carolinum" mentions a second passage of the King through Leominster, a few days afterwards.

	Days.	Distance.
Sonday, the 14, to Monmouth, dinner, the Governor's—to Hereford, supper—monday the 15 we marched half way to Brumyard, but there was "Leo in itinere," and so back to Hereford again	III	X
Thursday, the 18, to a Randezvous 5 miles from Homlacey, with intention for Worcester, Poins and Roscester in the passage, whereupon we remarched towards Hereford, so to Lempster,		

* "Renowned also is it for wheat and bread of the first floure, that Lemster Bread and Weobley Ale, are growne into a common Proverbe."—Camden's Britannia, vol. i., p. 690.

	Days.	Distance.
then to Weobley, then to Prestine and there halted at Master Andrewes: this march lasted from 6 in the morning, till mid night ..	I	XXVIII
Friday, 19th, to Newton—Mr. Price's: a long march	II	XIV

These visits of the King to Leominster, are also recorded by Major Lymander and Richard Symonds,* both officers in his army, and both intimately acquainted with his movements.

Two or three statements made by Mr. Williams, in his narrative of this visit of Charles I. to Leominster, require correction.† Mr. Williams says, that the King "repaired the succeeding morning to Croft-castle, where he had the happiness of meeting for the last time, his old and favourite chaplain, the venerable and learned Dr. Hammond, who, unqualified to struggle with those times of unexampled anarchy and danger, found an asylum, secure and honourable, in this ancient and hospitable mansion."

Ample historical evidence exists to prove that Dr. Hammond was in habitual attendance on Charles I. as late as 1647, two full years subsequent to this visit to Leominster. Dr. Fell, [in his "Life of Hammond,"] distinctly shows this:—"He (the King) being taken from the Parliament Commissioners into possession of the army, was permitted the service of some few of his chaplains, whom he had by name sent for, and among them Dr. Hammond. Accordingly, the good Doctor attended on his Master in the several removes of Woburn, Cavesham, and Hampton Court, as also thence into the Isle of Wight, where he continued till Xmas, 1647, at which time his Majesty's attendants were again put from him, and he amongst the rest."‡

* The Diary of Richard Symonds has been lately reprinted by the Camden Society. It consists of Notes on Churches, of interesting particulars of county families, and of the proceedings of the King, and of the Army.

Major Lymander's Notes are in MS. in the British Museum.

† See the Leominster Guide, p. 101.

‡ Fell's Life of Hammond, p. 54.

Mr. Williams scarcely does justice to Dr. Hammond, in his estimate of his character. He was a man peculiarly qualified "to struggle with those times of unexampled anarchy and danger." With equal zeal and boldness he had adhered, under all circumstances, to the cause of his royal master. On his compulsory retirement to his Canonry at Oxford, he assumed the management of the College, and put himself in the front of danger, and never ceased to protest against the proceedings of the Parliament. Facts best speak for themselves, and it would require a man of no ordinary nerve and courage to do in those days what is recorded to have been done by Dr. Hammond "He actually attended his Majesty as long as that Blessed Prince was allowed to have his own Divines about him: but when turned away, Dr. Hammond retired to his Canonry, and as it happened very seasonably; for being chosen Sub-Dean, the Visitation coming on and the Dean being taken into custody, he assumed the government. In November, 1647, he was summoned before the Committee for reformation of the University and outed of his Canonry and Oratorship, 30 Mar. 1648."*

It is also to be remarked that Dr. Hammond never found an asylum at Croft Castle. It is more than doubtful whether he was ever there. His patron and friend was Sir John Packington, the stout and loyal owner of Westwood, in Worcestershire—to which mansion Dr. Hammond retired on the death of his Sovereign—and under which roof he finished the works on which his fame rests.

There is another circumstance mentioned by Mr. Williams, which is equally without foundation, viz.: that Charles the Second came to Leominster in the course of his flight after the Battle of Worcester.† Mr. Williams gives the most circumstantial account of this visit: and imparts the utmost effect to

* Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, p. 103.

† This Battle was fought September 3rd, 1551. Oliver Cromwell, in a quaint spirit of irony, used to call this Battle "his crowning mercy: as it gave him the Supreme power."

his description, by making the unhappy Prince to sleep in the same apartment that had been occupied by his royal father, and there to "abandon himself to the most cutting reflections, on the instability of human affairs, the precarious state of royal grandeur, and the slippery and precarious condition of earthly princes."* If, however, the circumstances of any one historical event more than another be perfectly known, they are the circumstances attendant on the flight of Charles after the Battle of Worcester. Every particular of his escape; every separate and successive halting and hiding place, from the day of his defeat until the moment of his taking boat at Shoreham, in Sussex, are minutely known and accurately recorded. Lord Clarendon's History, written from personal communications with the King; the true Narrative and Relation of his Escape, dictated by Charles II. to Mr. Pepys, and contained in the Harleian Miscellany;† the account entitled "Boscobel," from the Oak in Worcestershire, in which the King lay hid; Bate's "Elenchus; and the "Short Narrative," by Father Huddlestone:—all these various publications) some of which were written under the direction of the Prince) give the most particular and succinct relation of Charles II.'s wanderings, hair-breadth escapes, and 'moving accidents by flood and field,' and yet all omit any reference to Leominster having been visited by the King in his flight: and we must still place as the last of English Kings who have visited Leominster the name of the Royal Martyr, King Charles I.‡

In 1646, Charles I. made the fatal resolve of retiring into Scotland. This disastrous step led to his being sold by the Scotch to the English Parliament, and to the rapid downfall of

* The Leominster Guide, p. 106.

† Vol. iv., p. 441.

‡ The List of the Kings of England who have probably visited Leominster:—HAROLD (p. 6); WILLIAM RUFUS (p. 8); STEPHEN (p. 20); JOHN (p. 21); EDWARD I. (p. 27); EDWARD IV. (p. 44); HENRY VII. (p. 44); CHARLES I.

his fortunes. At this same date, the commencement of this year, Hereford, Leominster, and all this side of Herefordshire succumbed entirely to the Parliament, through the active exertions and successful tactics of Colonel John Birch.

A short account of this soldier of fortune may not be uninteresting: more especially as he was connected with the Town during the whole period of the Commonwealth. Birch was originally a pack-horse driver. Having fallen in with some Parliamenterian soldiers under the immediate command of Cromwell, who would have robbed his bales, he so manfully defended his goods with a bold tongue and strong arm, that Cromwell at once offered him a commission in his troop.* Having thus joined that body, which must always have a material influence in every Revolution, he obtained rapid promotion at the hands of his Patron. After the example of his master, he combined a most unscrupulous use of power, with a keen eye to the advancement of his own interests. In his occupation of Leominster he displayed these two-fold qualities. He placed his cannon in the Churchyard, and threatened to fire on the Town on the first appearance of opposition from the Inhabitants. He caused, at the same time, the Bailiff and Burgesses to nominate him as their Representative in Parliament. He took up his residence at Whitbourne, which with other manors he had purchased at a comparatively small price, from the Parliamentary Commission, presided over by Wroth Rogers at Hereford, and greatly enriched himself by the various sequestered estates of the gentry.

* Birch had some pretensions as a Commander. The Town of Ludlow did not yield to Sir William Brereton the Parliamenterian General, commanding in Shropshire, till 1646, some few months later than Leominster. On one occasion, during this short interval, Sir Michael Woodhouse and Sir William Croft, the Royalist leaders, despising the Packhorse general, made an attempt to drive him out of Leominster. Birch, however, obtaining an accurate knowledge of their plans, sallied forth and attacked them at midnight, and cut their force to pieces, near Eyton, a village not far from Leominster.

These items occur in the Chamberlain's accounts in connection with Colonel Birch :—

	£	s.	d.
1651. For wine sent to Colonel Birch, by Mr. Ensoll	2	0	2
1652. It^{m}—paid for one gallon of sack for Coll Birch, when he was at Mr. Bayliff Nelme's ..		8	0
1654. For bringing Venison from Col. Birch ..		5	0

Colonel Birch must have found his interests advanced by the Commonwealth, and must have experienced a pleasant exchange from the hard fare and humble labours of the pack-horse driver, to the honours of Parliament, the excitements of military service, the glories of civic feasts, and the more substantial rewards of noble mansions, extensive deer parks, and rich manors. At the Restoration, Birch contrived to retain a greater part of this wealth ; and made his peace with the Royal Government. He lived at The Homme, near this Town, for many years, discharging the duties of a country Squire, and serving in Parliament for the Borough of Weobley. He survived long enough to see and to assist in a second expulsion of the Stewarts, and died in 1691. A superb monument is erected to his memory in Weobley Parish Church: in which he is represented in a life-size marble figure, arrayed in the flowing wig, lengthened boots, and rich apparel of a Cavalier.

The Chamberlain's accounts of this period seems to show that the ordinary proceedings of the Bailiff and Burgesses were very little different under the Commonwealth from what they had been under the Monarchy. The same payments occur as heretofore, almost in the same words. The same charges are made for the entertainment of the Judges of the Assize, for the wages and gowns of the Serjeants and the Beadle, for the dinners of the Bailiffs, for the Constables beating the bounds on Holy Thursday, for the payment of the Schoolmasters, for the preaching of the Sermons, for the cleaning the Churchway, or the Street leading to the Church.

	£	s.	d.
1651.—For 3 gallons of sack for the Judges—two burnt and one raw	1	10	0
„ For beere and tobacco at that time ..		5	0
„ Paid to Mr. John Stephens—sweetmeats for the Judges		9	8
1653.—The Constables on Holy Thursday ..		6	8
„ Richard Walton, for carrying up the Charter		3	0

[This last item was connected with the sale of the annual Fee-farm Rent of £16 17s. 3d., the property of the Crown, to the Bailiff and Burgesses, by the order and consent of the Parliament.]

The Inhabitants seem quietly to have obeyed the Government de facto, and to have acquiesced in the political requirements of the day. The Chamberlain's accounts contain these items:—

	£	s.	d.
1652-3.—Paid for pulling downe the Kinge's armes, and for makeing up the wall; and for mending the glasse window		7	0

[These arms were placed in the Council Chamber, over the Forbery Gate.]

1656.—Paid for wine and beere on that day when the Protector was p̄claimed, to the Trmpet^{rs}..	1	1	6

The morality of the Town does not seem to have been superior under the Commonwealth to what it was under the Monarchy. This item occurs in the account of Edward Haye, Esq., Bailiff in the year 1655.

	£	s.	d.
Received by inflicting the payne of the Statute upon several Drunkards and Swearers	3	3	4

There are indications in the Chamberlain's accounts of a military element in the general government of the Town and District. Cromwell, shortly after his acceptance of the office of Protector, appointed eleven Major-Generals, to whom he entrusted the superintendence of the various counties of England. These high officers were invested with very comprehensive and almost irresponsible powers. Their office and duty

was to watch the Royalists, and to take a Roll and account of all persons suspected of disaffection. Their arbitrary conduct helped to render unpopular the Government of the Protector, and hastened the downfall of the Commonwealth. Major-General James Berry was appointed the Military Commissioner for Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and North Wales.* He is most probably the person for whom these charges in the Chamberlain's account were incurred :—

		£	s.	d.
1655.	Itm—To Mr. Bond, for wine for the Major General		13	0
,	Itm—For Dyett for the Major Genl and his Company		10	0
„	Itm—For Beere, tobacco, and burnt Sidar ...	1	4	0
„	Itm—To Mr. Ensoll, for sack		4	0
„	Itm—To the Ringers, for Beere		3	0
1656.	Itm—For Dyett for the Major-General and his Lady		10	0
„	Itm—For Beere, tobacco, and Sidar ..		7	0
„	Itm—For a quart of sack, and a quart of white wine and sugar		4	0
„	Itm—To the Ringers		3	6
„	Itm—For 2 quarts of sack, when the Major-General lay at my house		4	0

Another proof of the military occupation of the Town is afforded in the circumstances narrated of the Harleys of Brampton Bryan. At the commencement of the Civil Wars, this ancient family almost stood alone, among the gentry of Herefordshire, as the zealous supporters of the Parliament. Lady Brilliana Harley, in 1643, with heroic courage, made a successful stand, in her House at Brampton Bryan,† against the

* See Heath's Chronicle of the Civil War, Part ii., p. 246.

† See, for an account of this siege, the Introduction by Mr. Lewis, late Vicar of Aymestrey, to Brilliana Harley's Letters, pp. xix, xx. "The resistance of the Inhabitants of Hereford for seven weeks to the Scottish Army, and the noble defence of Brompton Bryan Castle, led by a woman, and by a physician from Hereford, Dr. Wright, shine out conspicuous among the many heroic actions and defences related of the period of the Civil Wars."

Royal Squirearchy and militia of the County. Sir Robert Harley, her husband, and Colonel Edward Harley, her son, held Commissions in the Parliamenterian army, and made considerable sacrifices of money, of arms, and men in their behalf. Colonel Edward Harley, however, shared the feelings of the gallant Falkland, of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, and others of the more moderate party in the State. Borne along by the violence of the times, he had opposed the King (in what he deemed) his arbitrary measures, but he never designed the extinction of the Monarchy, and in the prospect of that event dreaded to look upon, and was willing to destroy, the Frankenstein he had assisted to create. Endued with a spirit of manly independence, and scorning to exchange one master for another, he joined those eleven members of the House of Commons* who set themselves to oppose the ambitious designs of Cromwell; and thus rendered himself obnoxious to the Protector. Cromwell, as soon as opportunity allowed, caused him to be put under restraint, and kept him as a prisoner of State, during the whole remaining period of his supreme power. Major Winthrop, the officer in command of the Town of Leominster, was the instrument of

* These eleven members were—Lord Denzil Hollis, Sir Philip Stapylton, Sir William Lewis, Sir John Clotworthy, Sir William Waller, Sir John Maynard, Colonel Massey, Mr. Glyn, Colonel Long, Colonel Edward Harley, Anthony Nicholls, Esq. These had all been zealous Parliamenterians, and several of them—as Sir William Waller, who captured Hereford—Colonel Massey, who maintained, for six weeks, Gloucester, against the King's whole army—Colonel E. Harley, who carried to his death a bullet received in the field—had fought and bled in their cause. They opposed, however, Cromwell and the army; and, as is the case with the first movers in all Revolutions, they were each and all got out of the way, and were imprisoned or proscribed, by men of more violent and extreme views than themselves. Edward Harley was a prisoner for ten years, from his surrender to Major Winthrop. At the Restoration he joined General Monk, and met Charles II. at his landing at Dover. He was appointed Governor of Dunkirk: which he held till its disgraceful sale to the French. He was one of the first to declare himself for William III., and obtained the acknowledgment of him by the City of Worcester, before James II. had vacated the throne. He was the father of Robert Earl of Oxford, and of Edward Harley, the Auditor, and Recorder for forty years, for the Borough of Leominster.

carrying out this purpose of the Protector. The following correspondence* took place on the occasion :—

To my honored ffriends Col. Harlowe and Major Harlowe these present.

Gentlemen—I have received some commands from the Commissioners for the Militia of this Countye concerning yourselves, grounded (as I believe) upon some information of your disaffection to this present government, and therefore that I should send for you to my quarters at Leominster: but I shall only at present lett you know that they expect you should appear before them at Hereford, on Tuesday next, and so I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your friend and Servant,

(Signed) S. WINTHROP.

Leominster, 3 August, 1650.

Letter from Colonel Harley to Major Winthrop.

Sir,—I received by this bearer a letter from you dated this day, and directed to myself and my brother Major Harley (who

* These additional Letters between Colonel Harley and his Father may be interesting, as illustrative of the feelings and language which pervaded the correspondence of a refined and well-educated Puritan family at this period. The correspondence is extracted from a mass of family Letters in the possession of the Lady Frances Harcourt.

Sir Robert Harley to Coll: Harley.

Ned Harley,—I trust the Lord hath in mercy brought you safely to London and will proceed you in all your affaires there and in his good time return you to my joy. Divide my blessinge with your brother, and your sister, and her husband, and the blessinge of Heaven be upon you all, and tell your brother Thomas I thank him for his letter.

I am your most loving Father;

Ludlow, May 17th, 1653. RO: HARLEY.

For Coll: Edward Harley, at Mr. Dodd's House in Tuttle Street, in Westminster.

Col: Harley to Sir Robert Harley.

Sir,—I trust the same mercy which conducted me safely hither comfortably, preserved you. If that confidence did not refresh me, this journey would be very sad, but I dare not doubt the tender compassions of our heavenly Father to you because I have alwaies experienced your tenderness to me.

hath been gone out of this country now four days) in which you express that you have received some commands, grounded as you believe upon information of our disaffection to the present government, from the Commissioners of the Militia, to send for us to your quarters at Leominster, where for the present you are,

Thus I beseech you give me leave according to our Lord & Saviour's precious logick to make some returne for your fatherly love to me, with assurance of an infinite Fatherly love to you.

Sir, if the Lord God see it good to permit Satan to discover his malice, be pleased to consider that your age, and weakness which encourage Satan to assault you they doe much more assure you of victory, because all the retrenchments from your own ability to resist, doe place you more closely & imediately under the secure protection of the Lord of Hosts, who I doubt not, will graciously avenge you of your spirituall adversary, will make his candle shine upon your head, & having sanctified all his dispensations towards you will fully assure you that having given you his son, How shall He not with Him freely give you all things. Thus humbly prayes he who begs your blessinge for, sir, your most obedient son,

Birmichen, Feb. 2, 1653-4. EDW: HARLEY.

To his most honoured Father Sir Robert Harley, K^t^ of the Bath,
at Ludlow, present these.

The same to the same.

Sir,—I bless you for your letter and for the testimony of his goodness to you which I trust will be graciously continued and enlarged. I am not yet a certainty whether I shall procure the money by the security of an Assignation of your statute to ye Earle of Lincolne or by a new statute, but I doubt not a speedy dispatch through God's goodness.

Wendsday last the Lord protector rode in great state from Temple bar to Grocer's Hall, The Lord Mayor rode bare with the sword before him and was knighted by him after the banquet, and the sword y^e^ Protector did then weare he bestowed upon the Mayor. The Recorder his speech I present to you enclosed. I beseech the Lord in Mercy confirme your health according to his abundant mercy which is the prayer of him that humbly begs your blessinge and is sir your most obedient sone, EDW: HARLEY.

London, Old Bayley,
Feb. 11th, 1653-4.

For y^e^ Right Worshipful Sir
Robert Harley, Kn^t^ of y^e^ Bath
at Ludlow, Shropshyre.

The following eulogium on Sir Robert Harley occurs in a Sermon preached on the occasion of his Funeral by the Rev. Thos. Froysell, Minister of Clun:

"If other saints are candles, he was a torch. If others are starres, he was a starre of greater magnitude. He made his outward greatnesse but a servant to the exercise of his graces. He was a copy for all great men to transcribe in all descending ages. He was a man of desires: a saint in great letters: famous (I think) throughout the land, one where or other, for his graces. To my knowledge eminent ministers did most eminently prize him. Sir Robert Harley was a sweet name upon their lips."

and let us know that the Commissioners expect our appearance before them at Hereford, on Tuesday next.

Sir,—After giving you thanks for your civility, I must take liberty something to wonder, that the Commissioners for the Militia should in such manner summon myself and brother, who are members of parliament, who have from the beginning of the late unhappy troubles constantly and faithfully served the Parliament, and I am sure cannot be justly taxed with the least disaffection to it. If our coming into this country, our birth-place, and where God hath disposed the means of our livelyhood, be ill-interpreted, it is without reason; for, I assure you, no design brought me hither, but the dispatch of some necessary occasions, concerning my father's estate, which being once dispatched, I shall, God willing, returne to London. This being all my business in these parts, I hope that liberty which is not denied to those who have been in armes ageinst the Parliament, shall not be grudged to us who have lost our blood and suffered so much for the Parliament. But if this, which is nothing but the truth, do not satisfy you I will, if please God, visit you on Monday next at Leominster.

These documents prove the condition of Leominster at this period, and show that it was occupied as a garrison town, by a troop of Parliamenterian soldiers, under the command of Major Winthrop. The Inhabitants would have received kindly and respectful treatment at his hands; if he displayed in his conduct towards them the same spirit of gentlemanly bearing, and graceful courtesy which shine out in his brief correspondence with Colonel Edward Harley.

The Inhabitants of the Town found a friend at this time where they had little reason to expect one, in Mr. Tombes, their lately expelled Vicar. The order of Bishops being abolished, the use of the Book of Common Prayer forbidden under the severest penalties, the Directory established in its stead, as the authorized form of public worship, Tombes could

conduct the divine service according to his own fashion, and resumed his duties as the Minister of the Parish, no man making him afraid. Tombes is described as a little, neat-limbed man, with a quick eye. He was a learned, eloquent, and energetic preacher, but still more celebrated as a keen and vehement controversialist. He was frequently called upon to preach before the House of Commons, and in 1653 was nominated one of the Triers for the appointment of Ministers. This high office brought him into connection with the chief religious movements of the day, and gave him a voice in the disposal of vacant benefices. Like his associates in office, he did not neglect his own interests, but was presented to, and held at the same time with the Vicarage of Leominster, the Mastership of the Hospital at Ledbury, the Rectory of Ross, and the Vicarage of Bewdley. This last preferment brought him into proximity with the celebrated Richard Baxter, who was located in the neighbouring Town of Kidderminster. Two such giants in controversy could not approach each other without an encounter, and this record is left of their disputations:—"Tombes was the Coryphæus of the Ana-baptists, Baxter of the Presbyterians. Once, I think often, they disputed face to face, and their followers were like two armies."* Tombes, in 1658, married, as his second wife, Mrs. Abbott, a rich widow at Salisbury. At the Restoration he resigned his numerous cures, and retired to Salisbury, where he returned to his first spiritual allegiance, attended the Cathedral service, and conformed to the Church of England. He died in 1670.

Leominster seems to have been his favourite cure, as out of all his numerous benefices, he chose it as his place of residence. He was reconciled to his Parishioners on his return, and promoted their interests by his influence with the Parliament. He was instrumental, in 1650, in obtaining from the Commissioners appointed by the Parliament for the sale of Crown

* Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses, vol. ii., p. 410. Neale's History of the Puritans. Calamy's Abridgement of Baxter's History and Times.

Lands, the purchase in perpetuity by the Bailiff and Burgesses of the Annual Fee-farm Rent of £16 17s. 4d., reserved to the Crown, for the sum of £104. This deed of purchase is yet carefully preserved among the records of the Corporation. At the Restoration, this deed of purchase became invalid, and was unrecognized, and the Crown resumed the payment of the Fee-farm Rent; but, on its production, all the arrears of rent accruing during the Commonwealth, were remitted and excused.

While the Fee-farm Rents were sold by the Parliamentary Commissioners to the Bailiff and Burgesses, the extensive Manor of Leominster, the property of the Duke of Buckingham, was sequestered, and granted by the Parliament to Colonel Henry Marten. This gentleman, the son of Sir Henry Marten, who had attained, by the favour of Charles I., to the dignity of a Judge, not only signed the death warrant of the the King, but gained an unenviable fame in having been the person who prompted Cromwell to frame the indictment against the King "in the Name of the Commons of England." The circumstances are thus related in the published account of his trial as a Regicide, on the Restoration of the Monarchy, by a witness of the scene.* "When their prayer was over, there came news that the King was landed at Sir Robert Cotton's Stairs: at which, Cromwell run to the window, looking on the King as he came up the garden; he returned as white as the wall: Then turning to the Board, said thus: 'My Masters, he is come, he is come, and now we are doing that great work, that the whole Nation will be full of, therefore I desire you to let us resolve here, what answer we shall give the King when he comes before us: for the first Question that he will ask us will be, By what Authority and Commission do we try him?' To which none answered presently. Then after a little space, Henry Marten, the Prisoner at the bar, rose up, and said, 'In

* Trial of the Twenty-nine Regicides, p. 243.

the Name of the Commons and Parliament assembled, and all the good People of England.'* Which none contradicted."

Henry, or as he preferred to be called, Harry Marten, was the wit of the House of Commons. After his condemnation as a Regicide, while in prison under a sentence of death, he could not repress his natural spirit of humour. In his petition to the King for pardon, he said, "that he had surrendered in reliance on the Royal Declaration at Breda, and he hoped that he who had never obeyed any Royal Proclamation before, should not be hanged for taking the King's word now."* His petition was granted, and he received his pardon.

Henry Marten only once visited the Town of Leominster. The Bailiff and Burgesses would have embraced every opportunity of showing attention to so important a person as the Lord and owner of their Manor.

This one item occurs in the Chamberlain's accounts:—

1650. For wine and metheglin,* bestowed on Coll. Marten .. .. 10s.

* The following act of womanly heroism protesting against this indictment of Marten's, should be recorded whenever the indictment itself is referred to:—"The arrangement for the trial being adjusted, when the Crier, calling over the Court, pronounced the name of Fairfax, a voice answered from among the spectators, 'He has more wit than to be here.' When the charge was read against the King, in the Name of the People of England, the same voice exclaimed, 'Not a tenth part of them.' Orders were given to fire into the box whence these insolent observations came; but it was discovered Lady Fairfax was there. Clarke's Memoirs of the King's Supremacy, p. 234.

A like bold spirit was displayed by a Dignitary of Hereford Cathedral. Herbert Croft, the Dean, though a prisoner on parole, and in the power of the Parliamenterians, when preaching in the Cathedral, so exasperated the soldiers, by his plainly showing them the heinous nature of the rebellion, that they all instantly charged, levelled their muskets at him in the pulpit, and were with great difficulty restrained by Colonel Birch from firing on him.—Price's Hereford, p. 48.

* Pictorial History of England, vol. iii., p. 611.

* Metheglin: drink made of honey boiled with water, and fermented.

T'allay the strength and hardness of the wine,
And with old Bacchus, new metheglin join.—Dryden.

A very general belief prevails that supernatural appearances in the heavens have accompanied, and apparently foretold, things unusual in the affairs of men.* Among the most remarkable of these may be recorded the presence of a comet, synchronizing with the death of Cæsar; the sounds of departing feet, and the voices of warning, attendant on the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem; the flaming sword, and the sight of armies in the sky that preceeded the great plague of London, in 1665. In a similar manner, the extraordinary events which had taken place in England, the first death ever recorded in the world's history of a King upon a scaffold, after a trial by his own subjects, the extinction of the Monarchy, the destruction of the Church, the sequestration of the estates of the antient gentry, the fantastic tricks of men unaccustomed to authority, and yet elevated to power, were accompanied with the belief in unusual occurrences, and in strange sights and omens. The mind of the Nation was now strained to the highest point of excitement and expectation. Hearts failed for fear, imaginations were inflamed, anticipations of the wildest nature generally prevailed. Rumours of strange prodigies of the most wondrous and alarming nature were reported and believed.

* Mr. Wright mentions another remarkable instance of this belief in the occurrence of supernatural omens, at a period in our English history when civil strife raged in the land, and when the tone of the national mind was somewhat similar, though less intense, in its excitement, to that which prevailed during the Commonwealth. "The troubles which marked the year 1233 are said to have been preceeded by extraordinary natural phenomena: when the sun rose over the Counties of Hereford and Worcester, on the morning of the 8th of April, the inhabitants of those districts were astonished at beholding it accompanied by four other suns, arranged in a visible circle, which appeared to embrace within its circumference the whole of England, this larger circle being cut by four smaller ones, the four false suns forming the points of intersection. The apprehensions excited by this prodigy were heightened by the knowledge of the distrust which already appeared between the ill-advised Monarch and his Barons."—Wright's History of Ludlow, p. 157.

Almost every County had its own marvel and wonder.* Two of these singular stories are connected with the immediate neighbourhood of Leominster. They are not very lengthy, and we publish them *verbatim et literatim*, as curious documents, highly illustrative of that overstrained phase of the National mind, arising from the extraordinary events which had occurred, and which alone could give rise to, or obtain even a momentary credence for such narratives. The first of these Pamphlets is very scarce. The copy from which this transcription has been made is in the British Museum. It is to be found under the head of "Prophecy," E. 566.

"VOX INFANTIS, OR THE PROPHETICAL CHILD;

BEING A TRUE RELATION OF AN INFANT THAT WAS FOUND IN A FIELD, NEERE LEMPSTER, IN HEREFORDSHIRE, JULY 16, 1649, THAT DID DECLARE AND FORETELL OF MANY STRANGE THINGS THAT SHALL ENSUE IN ENGLAND AND IRELAND, WITHIN THE SPACE OF THREE YEERES, CONCERNING THE CROWNING OF CHARLES THE SECOND KING OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND; HIS GREAT VICTORIES, WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF THIS PRESENT PARLIAMENT AND ARMY; AND MANY OTHER PASSAGES TOUCHING THE DEATH OF OUR LATE KING.

THIS RELATION IS ATTESTED TO BEE TRUE, AS APPEARES BY THE HANDS OF SEVERALL WITNESSES ANNEXED TO THE BOOKE.

LONDON, PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1649.

"The workes of the Lord are wonderfull! And the heavens pp. 3
declare his handyworke. Before the day of judgement signes shall appeare in the firmament and wonders upon the face of the earth; Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdome against Kingdome, there shall bee famines pestilences and earthquakes

* The commonalty, alive to omens, fancied that they observed them in many places; which, as the aspect of affairs grew more gloomy, might have acted with increased force upon their credulity and expectations. Some time previous to the breaking out of the troubles, the Tewkesbury carrier asserted,

in divers places; Factions schismes and heresies in the Church, and distractions feares and oppressions in the Commonwealth. Are not all these judgements fallen upon us? For the nationall sinnes of this Kingdome are these things come to passe? Who lookes upon these bloody and unnaturall warres which have continued the space of seaven yeeres amongst us? Where the most flourishing Kingdome in the Christian World, is now become the theater of misery, and a spectacle of lamentation; where brother hath slaine his brother, and the sonne hath not spared to sheath the sword in the bowells of his father, Eng-
pp. 4 land! the glory of Europe, is now become the scene or stage of rebellion blood and murther. A den of vipers. A cage of uncleannesse, and a nursery or all sects and schismes. The subjects of the most virtuous Prince that ever swayed the scepter in this Kingdome have made it no sinne or guilt to sacrifice the blood of their Soveraigne to their ambitious fury.

"How many forerunners of these our calamities and sorrowes have beene heretofore declared and predicted, to forewarne us of the evils to come; but wee have rejected and contemned them as erronious and ridiculous, but our sufferings have made us sensible what our sinne and tenacity hath brought upon us.

"I shall for your better information, particularise some of the most remarkable miracles and wonders that have appeared in these latter times.

"As for instance; at Bradford, in Yorkshire, in the yeere of our Lord one thousand six hundred forty eight, there appeared

that as he was passing over the Cotswold hills, with his men and pack-horses, a little before the dawn of day, they "saw most sensibly and very perspicuously in the air, musket tiers, harnassed men, and horsemen, moving in battel array, and assaulting one another in divers furious postures." Similar appearances were said to have been noticed with respect to the fight at Edge Hill; an account of which is contained in a pamphlet entitled, "A Great Wonder in Heaven, shewing the late apparitions and prodigious noyses of war and battles, seen on Edge Hill, near Keinton in Northamptonshire, certified under the hands of William Wood, Esq., and Justice of the Peace in the saide county, Samuel Marshall, Preacher of God's word in Keinton, and other persons of qualitie. 1642."—Webb's Bibliotheca Gloucestrensis, part iii., p. 137.

in the ayre the visions of two severall armies, in batalia skyrmishing one against another, with colours flying, the sound of drumms were perfectly heard, and the noyse of musquett reports, which continued the space of three houres, to the admiration of many hundreds who were spectators, and shortly after it vanished.

"Againe, neere Skipton in the same countie, not farre from Denton (where the L^d^ Generall Fairfax was born) in the yeere of our Lord one thousand six hundred fourty nine, it rayned blood, of which myselfe was an eye-witnesse in the company of many more.

"In the same yeere (at six of the clock in the morning) being in June, two sonnes appeared, and continued visible the space of two hours.

"What inordinate thunders, tempests, and earthquakes hath been of late yeeres; great and impetuous winds and stormy weather, losses at sea, with great inundations on the land.

"At Dublin in Ireland, in the yeere of our Lord one thousand pp. 5
six hundred fortie, another wonderfull sight in the sky, where thousands of byrds, called Sterlings did meete neere the City like two armies and fought untill many were killed and fell in great multitudes on the earth.

"The like was neere Scarborough not farre from Rippon in Yorkeshire, in the yeere one thousand six hundred forty foure, where thousands of crowes called Rookes did meete and fight in two bodies, untill an innumerable company were killed and fell upon the ground.

"In Norfolke, in the yeere of our Lord one thousand six hundred forty five a child was borne who presently spake some certaine things that should ensue in these times and lived not above two hours.

"In Buckinghamshire in the yeere one thousand six hundred fourty nine, a child was borne (neere Alisbury) that declared some strange passages, which should happen in this Kingdome and lived not above three dayes, but dyed.

"But I shall forbeare to mention any more in this nature (because I would not seeme tedious to the reader): And now to the relation of this strange and muraculous wonder I promised you, which is attested by many sufficient eye-witnesses there present, that will averre and manifest this relation for a truth, against the incredulous and unbelieving times.

"On Monday July the sixteenth, one thousand six hundred fourty nine, necre Lempster in Herefordshire (hard by a village called the Hope,* not farre from Croft Castle) certaine workmen or mowers, that went to cut downe grasse or hay, in a very large and spacious field containing above threescore acres, and being at their laborious worke (betwixt the houres of ten and eleven) they heard the crying of an Infant or a young child, which they imagined to bee in the middle of the field: but pausing a little while with giving attention to it, not without admiration; they concluded unanimously, or all of them, to goe to the place from whence they heard the voyce; and comeing to
pp. 6 the place in the middle of the grasse or field, they found a young child, which was wrapped up in swadling clouts, and to their judgements, appeared not to bee above a quarter of a yeere old: standing thus amazed with their eyes fixed upon the child, at last resolved to take it up, and to make some of the chiefe of the Towne acquainted with the accident. But one of the mowers or labouring men (having never a child at all, replyed he would take it home as his owne, the rest of them having made it knowne to the Towne, the child was brought to a house, where the Inhabitants round about flocked together to see this child; after every ones Censure was past upon this Infant, they provided some sustenance for it, suspecting it was hungry, which was milke and flouer boyled in it (which that countrey calleth pap;) the child eating very heartily of it, and being therewith satisfied began to speake to all the people there present, and told them that it was the best meate he did ever eate, which

* A part of Hope is to this day in the Parish of Croft.

Miracle in an Infant so young, bred admiration and astonishment in all the spectators.

"This child told them further, that the warres of England should continue three yeeres longer, and that Charles a young King whose father was put to death by seventeene of his subjects that conspired his death long before, who for acting such a bloody tragedy shall come to untimely ends, not any of them shall die in their beds; saying also, that innocent blood calls for vengeance; and that which they spilt in the first moneth, shall in the same moneth prove their destruction, and his sonne bee restored to the Crowne of England. Againe, this child further related, that the Kingdome of Ireland shall proclaime him King of his Father's Realmes, and bee the landing place from all his troubles and exile: and after that hee shall conquer England againe, and shall destroy his and his father's enemies and bee a great and powerfull prince. Then shall this land flourish againe: And in that field where hee was found shall bee a great and bloody battle fought greater than any yet hath beene in this Kingdome, where the young King Charles the second of pp. 7
that name shall get the day and win the field.

"The people and inhabitants thereabouts, hearing these sayings proceeding from an infant were struck into great amazement, and after the child had done speaking, they resolved how to provide for him, but he answered againe, take no care for me; and withall desired they would carry him to the place where they found him, which according as he commanded them, they did: And being brought to the place they laid him downe, hee thanked them and wished them all to love one another, and relieve the oppressed, and succour the fatherlesse and the widdowe, feare God and hee will bless your labour, bee no time-servers, meddle not with them that are given to change; observe these sayings, your reward shall bee in Heaven: My time is set; I have no more to say but shall now leave you. Uttering these words, "Glory bee to God on high peace on earth &c." and so vanished away.

"Some of the Inhabitants doe believe it to bee an Angell sent down from Heaven; some are of opinion that it was a child newly borne, and left there by the mother, unto whom God gave power and strength to reveale his will; but it hath left a deepe impression in the hearts of some of them. This copy was taken by one that was both an eye and an eare witnesse of these sayings and predictions, which this Infant revealed to all. His time of abode and continuance with us was about three houres.

"This relation was communicated from George Colly of Hope neere Lempster, to a friend in London to bee published in print, desiring three hundred copies to bee sent him to bestow upon friends.

"The witnesses that attest this relation to bee truth in every particular; are

"Sampson Jones, Gent, Henry Shipman, Richard Williams,
pp. 8 John Nicholls, John Carey, Humphrey Seres, Thomas Apperley, Henry Reynolds, William Woodhouse, Anthony Harlow, Michael Simpson, Ambrose Gerey, Owen Parker, George Colly.

Dated at Hope neere Lempster, Com: Hereford.
the 20 of July, 1649.

This second Pamphlet, even more than the first, is connected with Leominster, both by its title, and by the seat of the prodigy being nearer to the Town. It is not quite so uncommon as the "Vox Infantis," and may occasionally be met with. The copy, of which this transcription has been made is found in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford.

"STRANGE NEWS FROM LEMSTER; IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

BEING A TRUE NARRATIVE, GIVEN UNDER SEVERAL PERSONS HANDS THERE, OF A MOST STRANGE AND PRODIGIOUS OPENING OF THE EARTH, IN DIVERS PLACES THEREABOUTS. ALSO, A TRUE RELATION OF SEVERAL WONDERFUL SIGHTS, VIZ., A HAND, AN ARM AND A SHOULDER OF THE BIGNESS OF A MAN'S; AND SADLES OF BLOOD-COLOUR; WHICH

WERE SEEN TO ARISE OUT OF THE EARTH AND ASCEND UP TO THE SKYES. LIKEWISE, A STRANGE AND TERRIBLE NOISE OF FIGHTING, WHICH WAS HEARD DURING THIS MIRACULOUS ACCIDENT.

ALL ATTESTED BY SEVERAL PERSONS OF WORTH, AND REPUTATION; AND EXHIBITED FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION.

LICENSED, MAY THE THIRD.

LONDON, PRINTED FOR B. HARRIS, 1679.

"Strange and various are the operations of the Almighty, pp. 3
and his ways past finding out! Who can dive into his intentions, or with the short Line of Humane Reason expect to Fathom his Immence Wisdome, or by the unusual accurrances of extraordinary Accidents, Presage how he intends to deal with ignorant Mankind; especially since not only the Winds but the whole Universe is totally at His disposal.

"He who could constrain the industrious Sun to a supine gate, or friendly stay, in the heat and vigor of its hasty journey, we need not question but with the least beck of his finger, he can oblige inverted Nature to an unusual Retrogradation; can make her work Backwards; and willingly forgoe the accustomed Paths of her natural Progression, to Tread in those more amiable Footsteps of His indispensible Will.

"I will not spend any time in needless Phylosophysing, or pp. 4
giving any reputed cause for such unusual events, nor wast much Eloquence in the Relation of a Narrative, whose Verity commands a beleif, and its Nature a Dread, from the most incredulous and stubborn Persons that shall Read it. It has been Attested upon Oath, and is now both the Admiration and Consternation of the whole Country wherein it hapned.

"This dreadful apparition was first seen by one BANISTER of Lemster, in the County aforesaid, who as he was walking (on Tuesday the 15th Instant April) between the two Borroughs of Stockhen, and Kimerton, to his great amazement beheld the Earth to open not many Paces before him; at which he had for

a Considerable time admired; behold at last to his farther Amazement, he saw a Round thing proceed from that Gaping Part of the Earth, of a blew Colour, but in Form much resembling a Gloab, which watching with great intentedness, he might discern it, to move upwards, and ascend into the aire, till at length it got out of his sight, and hid it self among the sheltering Clouds.

"Much amus'd hereat, and almost mistrusting his own senses, he began to Contemplate on the strange Apparition, hardly believing his Eyes, or crediting but that he was asleep, and those Visions were but the evil Consequences of a bad Digestion, or Melancholly Brain, which often Hurries Men into such wild Fancies, and extravagant Conceptions which disturbs their Repose.

pp. 5 "But this doubt had not been debated, long before a fresh Wonder, unfolded the Riddle, and to the greatest assurance could be given any mortal Creature, assured him that he was awake and in his full and perfect Senses. For (this being about an hour before Sun set) as he was casting his heedful Eye towards that place which had been the first occasion of his Admiration, he plainly and distinctly beheld the Earth again to Open; and out of its Dreadful Mouth Proceeded a Hand, an Arm, and part of a Shoulder, about the bigness of those Parts of a Man. They appear'd in a Threatning Posture, the Hand being half Grasped, and of a black mournful Colour, and Ascending up into the Sky.

"He farther Deposed on Oath, that he saw the Earth open seven times, and every time Came forth out of the Ground, such an Arm, and Hand; of such a Colour, and like the former Ascended up into the Sky, til they Vanisht out of his sight.

"This most Wonderful Spectacle fill'd him with more Astonishment than the former, so that it took him up some time to consider of the strangeness of these Apparitions; but he had not long Gratifi'd his Inquisitive Mind with a serious Contemplation on their affrighting Aspect, when he beheld the

Earth to open again, and out of its wide Orifice, to proceed a Thing in resemblance of a Sadle; of a very deep Blood-colour. Six times did the Earth open and produce these resemblances of Sadles, which likewise ascended upwards, till at last they were got out of his sight.

"Whilst these things thus hapn'd, he remain'd within pp. 6
20 yards space of them, and being somewhat imboldened by seeing the Earth open so often, and no hurt came of it; he was at last, incouraged to draw nearer to the Visions, and would willingly have laid hold of them; but not capable of that, he drew so neer them, that he might perceive them to be of a solid Substance, and not Fictitious or Vaperous; he further says, he thinks, that if he had taken hold of those things, they had been palpable.

"That which is very remarkable is, that when this BANISTER came home, he related to several of his Neighbors, the strange things he had seen, and in what manner, and with what Circumstances he beheld them, whereat they all stood amazed; and Three of them, being more intent on his Relation than the rest, did desire of God, that if such a thing had bin realy seen over-night, that they might be permitted to behold it next morning; and when they had thus done, desired the said BANISTER to go along with them, to shew them the Place; which he Consented unto; so with great Patience they waited till morning. When being come unto the said Field, beheld these Three persons, whose names are, HUMPHREY LAWRENCE, SAMUEL SHOWRD, and one Mr. CORNEL, beheld the Earth open several times, and the like things ascending out of it, as BANISTER had seen before.

"It is farther Credibly reported, as an Evidence of the pp. 7
truth of this Narrative, that several Gentlemen in and about the aforesaid Town of Lemster, had a mind to go a Coursing the Next day; and having not heard any of this Wonderful Apparition, they at last Happened to Beat great part of the Morning so far on, till they arrived at that field where these

Wonderful Visions had so lately appeared; where they to their no small Amazement, had their Ears Saluted with a dreadful Martial Noyse, as if Cannons had been discharged: They also perceived dreadful and Terrible Flashes of Active Fire come out of the Ground, which put them into so great Astonishment, that they left their Recreation, and with no small Confusion repaird with all the speed they could make to their own homes, to tell their Friends and Neighbours what Wonders they had seen.

"And thus I have faithfully related to you the strange Apparitions which lately happened near LEMSTER in Herefordshire; which to all ingenuous persons, cannot but cause a great deal of wonder and Amazement; and perhaps to some, Fears and Ghesses at future Judgements, but let such save themselves the Labor of being troubled at any Celestial or Terrestial events, and employ that time he indiscreetly wasts in dejecting himself, and discouraging others, in looking home into his own Breast: let him but take a serious Cognizance of his own impieties, and repent of, and turn from them, and by this means he shall arrive at greater Satisfaction and content, than if he were begirt with Armies, guarded by a wall of Hardest Brass, whose Rampiers reach the Skyes; and by this means he is likeliest to Transmit
pp. 8 Comfort to his Religious friend or Neighbour, who will easily tell thee that it is that distructful Rubbish, Sin, that befouls our Glorious City, and that we can never expect it or its streets should be kept any thing clean, till every one Sweeps against his own door."

"Whoever Doubts of the Truth of this Relation, they may Repair to Mr. BARNES, an Oyl-Man over against Cripplegate Church, London; Or to Mr. BENJAMIN HARRIS, Book-Seller, near the Royal Exchange; and there they may see a Coppy of a Letter, which was sent from Mr. BARNES in the Country, to his Brother in London."

FINIS.

The consideration of these pamphlets brings to a termination this important era in the history of our Town. We have had, in the course of it, many events crowding on our attention. We have considered the union, public spirit, and combined energy of the Inhabitants, that led to the grant of our Charter; the condition of our Town at the period of its bestowal; its guilds, buildings, hospitalities, and presents. We have read of the customs, manners, and feelings of our Bailiffs and Burgesses in days gone by—their liberal courtesies to their influential neighbours, their entertainment of strange preachers, their favours to players, their sentiments of loyalty and of religion. We have sympathized with the devotion recorded of its Inhabitants to their Sovereign, and have wondered at the strange distractions which ensued as the consequences of his Martyrdom, and we must deduce as we proceed a moral from our tale. We must remember that in nations, as in individuals, there is a continued life. In the one, as in the other, the present is by some mysterious and unfailing law connected with the past. The antecedent chain of circumstances affects in its lasting moral consequences for good or evil each succeeding generation. Thus the principles and opinions which led to the quarrels, controversies, and differences between the gay Cavaliers and their sour visaged opponents, and which arrayed the Malignants and Roundheads into two hostile camps, still operate on and influence ourselves. We feel the eddyings of the circle caused by the stone they cast into the stream. We inherit their diverse passions, prejudices, sentiments and feelings. May their sufferings not have been endured in vain! May we learn from their history to be thankful for the blessings we enjoy in our political and ecclesiastical Constitution; which has come out refined from the furnace; which blends together in one equal and firm government the legitimate authority of the Sovereign, the calm wisdom of an hereditary Chamber, the spirit, energy, freedom, and continued amendments arising from the progressive impulses of a popularly elected deliberative Assembly; which sanctions the acknowledge-

ment of a National Religion, and yet with that sanction unites a most unrestricted toleration; which renders its people free, prosperous, and contented, and obtains for their institutions the admiration or the envy of mankind!

CHAPTER III.—A.D. 1539 TO 1861.

SECTION II.—1660—1861.

CONTENTS.—The results of the Restoration.—Leominster called "Little Amsterdam."—Its Inhabitants Royalists and Churchmen.—Renewal of its Charter, with additional privileges.—Population of the Town at this time.—Its Tradesmen's Tokens.—Sale of its Manor to Major Wildman.—Herald's visitation at Leominster.—A biography of Mr. John Dutton Colt.—His closetings with Charles II.—His release by James II.—Examples of James II.'s dispensing powers.—Opposition to them by a Townsman.—Accession of William III.—His favours to the Members for Leominster.—A biography of the first and last Earl Conyngsby.—His purchase of the Manor of Leominster.—His speeches, lawsuits, imprisonment, character.—His gift of the Maces.—Stukeley's account of his MSS., and of Hampton Court.—Destructive fires at Leominster.—Queen Anne's favour to the Member for Leominster.—Biography of Auditor Harley.—Unpublished letters of his son, the Third Earl of Oxford.—Account of the Town at the accession of George III.—The palmy days of its Corporation.—The Town Pack.—Hunting the Buck.—Their liberal largess.—First Lamps and Public Roads, and Parochial School.—Extracts from the Chamber Books from 1730 to 1830.—Acts relating to the navigation of the Lug.—Royal addresses.—Present condition of the Town.—Improvements.—Increase of its Population and Trade.—Conclusion.

ON the Restoration of Charles II., A.D. 1660, the affairs of the Kingdom quickly resumed their antient course. Every effort was made to obliterate the events of the preceding twelve years. A new Parliament was assembled. The hereditary privileges of the Peers, the sacred functions of the Bishops, the sequestered estates of the gentry were at once resumed. The Fee-farm Rents of the Borough were reclaimed by the Crown, and the Manor, though somewhat diminished from its fair proportions, reverted to the Duke of Buckingham. These changes were effected amidst the most unbounded and exuberant expressions of the national joy.

Some doubt has been expressed whether the Inhabitants of Leominster fully shared in these sentiments of rejoicings. The celebrated Lord Conyngsby, who was for many years the Representative of the Borough in Parliament, has left on record a curious and singular statement about the sentiments of the Townspeople at this period, and about the name by which the Town was known. He plainly impugns the Churchmanship, and by implication (for Churchman and Royalist were at this crisis synonymous terms) the loyalty of the population at this particular time. He says that "the Duke (of Buckingham) thought no more of presenting to this Vicaridge, no clergyman thinking it worth his while to sollicite for a Cure of so mean a value, and for which he knew he could be but Tenant at will, and when no voluntary contributions could be expected by any orthodox clergyman from the Inhabitants of the Town, which at that time for its number of Dissenters was termed 'Little Amsterdam.'"*

This statement must be received with hesitancy and with qualification. Not only was Lord Conyngsby a persevering and determined opponent of the family of the Stewarts, but this description itself was written by him in an angry mood, under circumstances of extreme irritation and annoyance, when his feelings were exasperated by a protracted and unsuccessful lawsuit. Leominster indeed, it cannot be denied, was at this period remarkable for the diversity of its religious opinions. Few Towns in the Kingdom of its size, containing a population of less than 3000 persons, could exhibit at this date three distinct assemblies of Separatists meeting for public worship.

The Rev. J. Tombes† had so far made a proof of his ministry

* Extract from the Lord Conyngsby's case, in reference to the Vicarage of Leominster, p. 36. This is a very scarce document. The Author is indebted for the loan of it to Mr. Edwin Lloyd, the present Chamberlain to the Borough. For a further account of Lord Conyngsby, see the later part of this present Chapter.

† The large Congregation at the Church under his ministry were of three sorts, probably the major part Conformists in heart, another part Baptists, another Presbyterians. Price's History of Leominster, p. 129.

during his second residence in the Parish, that on his resignation of his cure in 1661,* some of his more violent partizans espoused his peculiar opinions, seceded from the Parish Church, and formed a separate Congregation of Anabaptists.

The disciples of George Fox, or as they now prefer to call themselves, the "Society of Friends," also had a Congregation in the Town at this date.†

The third assembly of Separatists was composed of Presbyterian Dissenters, who were the followers of William Woodward, an ejected Minister from Richard's Castle, near Ludlow.‡

These religious differences amongst the Inhabitants may suffice to show the reasons for which the Town obtained the title of "Little Amsterdam," as recorded of it by Lord Conyngsby; but at the same time it can be established by sufficient proof that the more numerous and more influential portion of the Inhabitants were animated with those sentiments of zealous patriotism, of burning loyalty, and of faithful attachment to the Church, which had ever prevailed among them. They, who within the last twelve years had driven out their Vicar because of his Puritan tendencies, who had welcomed their King in almost the last hour of his perilous conflict, who, ere the close of this very century, repaired their Parish Church, when destroyed by a disastrous fire, at the

* The Chapel of the Anabaptists, thus originated, is situated in Etnam Street. It continues to the present day, and has received considerable revenues and endowments, more especially from Mrs. Mary Marlow, the daughter of a wealthy London Jeweller, who died at Leominster, Dec. 9, 1778.

† The followers of George Fox first met for public worship in this Town on the 27th of May, 1656, at the house of Henry Bedford. They met with opposition from the Rev. J. Tombes, (who had a controversy with their Founder,) and from the Magistrates. The ground for their House and Burial place was purchased in 1660; but the Chapel was not erected till 1689, and was then licensed by the Magistrates at Quarter Sessions.

‡ This Mr. Woodward was ejected under the St. Bartholomew Act of 1662. His followers met in private houses until the year 1689, when liberty of conscience being established by William III., they fitted up a place of public worship in Etnam Street, till the Meeting House in Burgess Street was completed and licensed in 1719.

cost of £16,500 must at this period of the Restoration have retained their long-cherished and long-accustomed sentiments of loyalty and of religion. There would be no sudden break, nor interruption in the general current of their opinions. The feelings that prevailed both before and after, must have animated them at the Restoration itself, and we may believe that the Inhabitants of Leominster were not the last to bring the King back, nor less enthusiastic than others in their rejoicings.

The Chamberlain's accounts show the most liberal expenditure, and the most universal and hearty joy in celebration of the King's return. Instead of the small sums paid to the Ringers on the visits of the Major-General to the Town during the Commonwealth, this ample largess was given on the occasion of the Coronation.

1661. Paid to the Ryngers on the Coronation Day 10s.

The Bailiff and Burgesses were content to expend one pound, one shilling, and one sixpence on the proclamation of the Protector: they open their purses with their hearts, and sanction this liberal outlay by their Chamberlain, in honour of their restored Sovereign.

1661.	At the Crowne on the Coronation day ..	£2 12s.
	Hogshead of Bere	1 10s.
	Widow Wanklin (the Landlady of the chief Inn)	5 0s.
	More to D°	1 0s.

There are other proofs of loyalty and of warmth of feeling on the glad event of the Restoration. The Chamberlain's Staff was refurnished, new gowns provided for the Sergeants, and the King's Arms restored at no little cost to their place in the Counsel Chamber. These items appear in the Chamberlain's accounts:

To William Caswell for his gowne	£1 10s.
William Badan for his gowne	1 10s.
For Carriage of the King's Arms & bere ..	3s.
To Mr. Thorne for the King's Armes ..	4 0s.

To Mr. Stead for to buy gold coulor and workmanship about the King's Armes .. .. .. 4 .. 8s.

[These "arms" are to this day suspended over the clock, in front of the Town Hall.]

To Mr. Walwyn for the Chamberlain's Staff.. .. 15s.

[This is the halberd given by Sir Thos. Conyngsby, and still preserved in the Town Hall.]

There is another item in the Account for the year 1661, which is worthy of insertion.

Gave to a distressed souldier	..	..	..	1s. 0d.
Gave to two more ..	..	..	..	1s. 6d.
Gave to two more ..	..	..	..	2s. 0d.
Gave to another company	..	..	..	2s. 6d.
Gave 3 that came from sea	..	..	..	1s. 6d.
Gave to several others	..	..	..	11s. 6d.

These items do not occur during the Commonwealth, although there must have been no lack of "distressed souldiers", through the casualties of the civil wars: and the presumption is, that these soldiers were Royalists, and the generosity displayed towards them is another proof, by an undesigned coincidence, of the loyal sympathies and feelings of the Inhabitants of Leominster.

In 1665, the Charter was renewed by the King. Charles II. showed his appreciation of the loyal allegiance of the Inhabitants by a liberal extension of the privileges, and by further additions to the honours and dignities of the Borough. He granted the right to elect a High Steward, Recorder, and Town Clerk, to nominate two Burgesses as Justices of the Peace, to hold a Court of Quarter Sessions and of recovery of debts, to proclaim an additional fair in Mid-Lent, and to open at every fair a Court of Pye Powder.

This latter privilege established a Court of equitable and ready justice, in which any matter of dispute arising in the fair between buyer and seller might be immediately decided. "The Court of Pye Powder" derives its name from two French words,

Pied (feet) and Poudrè (powdered), and is so called because the justice rendered in it is so speedy and summary, and so quickly visited on the offender, that he hath not even time to remove the dust which was on his feet when he committed the offence, before his offence is visited with punishment.* This Court is seldom put into requisition. The Mayor is the presiding Judge: and it is still proclaimed openly at the Cross, and at other prominent and accustomed parts of the Town on every Statute Fair day by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Town Councillors, attended by their Sergeants and Macebearers. The following is the Proclamation: "O yes! O yes! O yes! I,———Mayor, under our Sovereign Lady the Queen, for this her Borough of Leominster, and We, [here follow the names in the Commission] the Justices of the Peace for the same Borough, do strictly charge and command that Her Majesty's peace be kept during the fair or market, and that in the fair any one selling, exchanging, or buying, or putting away any horse, mare, gelding, or colt, do repair to the Mayor or Clerk of the market, and there enter their contract in that case made and provided in the Court of Pye Powder by reason of the same that this fair or market shall be holden and kept at the usual place of the said Borough and not elsewhere. God save the Queen."

The Bailiff and Burgesses did not obtain their new honours without considerable cost and outlay. They deputed Mr. John Stead, a Solicitor, and their first Town Clerk, to proceed to London to superintend the arrangements preliminary to the renewal of the Charter. The following were his charges to the Corporation on that occasion.

	£	s.	d.
To Oliver Hackluit, horsehire and carriage of my cloaths to London	1	2	0
My expenses on the road to London ..		12	0
Mr. Attorney Generall his opinion	1	1	6
His Majty his Refference to Mr. Attorney ..	2	3	4
His Report, and Ffee for the Charter ..	15	0	0

* Coke's Institutes, Vol. VII., p. 271. Cowell's Dictionary,

His Clark for drawing the Report, &c. ..	1	1	8
Mr. Matthew Johnson his ffee	6	0	0
Mr. Attorney's footman		5	0
Commission of the Peace cost	1	11	8
Box to carry it cost			6
Mr. Matthew Johnson's Clark		10	10
Mr. Thos. Johnson for wrighting 9 skins of Parchment	6	1	8
Secretary of State and Clark for the King's warrant and heads of the Charter	7	1	8
Secretary of State for his Majty his hands to 3 skins of Parchment being the Charter	9	0	0
For two Coppyes of the King's warrant and heads of the Charter		10	0
Signet office 10 guinyes	10	16	8
Privy Seale Ffees 10 guinyes	10	16	8
The Servants		5	0
Mr. North the Seale Bearer	5	8	4
His Clark		10	10
The Engrossing the Charter by Mr. Nicholl ..	15	1	4
The Sealer and officer to carry the Charter to Court		10	6
The Hanaper ffees	27	0	0
Printed tickets for the Ffair		9	0
Tinne Box for the Seale		1	4
Coach hire to Worcester	1	5	0
Expenses down		13	6
Mr. Harrott		10	0
	£125	10	0

On Mr. Stead's return the Bailiff and Burgesses awaited his arrival from Worcester, at the end of Etnam Street, and accompanied him, sitting on horseback, and carrying the Charter opened on his breast, in full civic procession, with the maces and mace-bearers, to the Market Cross, where they publicly drank the King's health amidst the cheers and congratulations of the Inhabitants.

The Population of the Town at the period of the Restoration was very slightly, if at all, in advance of what it was in the middle of the preceding century.

A Tax of two shillings upon every chimney* used in a house had been granted to the King on his return to his Kingdom. The following Hearth-Roll for the Town of Leominster, in the year 1666, is still found in the Record Office.

A true duplicate of the booke or roll of the King's Ma^ties^ revenew by Firehearths and stoves in the said County for the halfe yeare due att the feast of Thannunc of oure blessed Lady St. Mary the Virgin in the xviijth yeare of his Ma^ties^ raigne in pursuance of the Act of Parliam^t^ made and pvided for the ordering and collecting the revenew ariseing by Hearth-money. Signed by Richard Reed Esq^e^ and William Gregory Esq^e^ two of the King's Ma^ties^ Justices of the Peace of the said County and Nicholas Phillpott Gent Clerke of the Peace there.

RIC. REED.
W. GREGORY.
NICH. PHILLPOTT of Clerke of the Peace.

LEOMINSTER BURROW.—CROSSE AND PINSLEY WARD.

Fra. Powle, Gent	ix	Eliza. Touldervy	ij
Tho. Mamings	iij	John Tomkins, Gent.	vij
Anne Casewall, Vid	iiij	Tho. Hardwick	iij
John Bedford	iij	Eliza. Bond, Vid	vij
John Casewall	ij	Tho. Badnadge	iiij
Anne Powle	j	Abra. Greene	ij
Edwā. Haye, Gent	ix	Fran. Marten	iij
Rich. Corlett	iij	Samuell Taylor	ij

* Hearth Money was a tax established by the 13 and 14 Car. II., c. 10, whereby a hereditary revenue of 2s. for every hearth, in all houses paying the church and poor rates, was granted to the King. It was abolished upon the Revolution by the 1 W. and M., st. 1, c. 10.

The Chamberlain's accounts contain this item :—

1666. For the Hearth in the Council Chamber .. .. 2s.

For the population of the Town in the last century, see pp. 52, 61.

Hugh Silley	ij	John Smyth	j
Rich. Casewall	ij	John Enoe	ij
John Hodges	j	Walter Powell	iij
John Grubb	ij	Charles Barnett	iiij
Jane Wellington	v	Wm. Casewall	v
John Grubb, Ju.	j	Tho. Gittoes	iij
Wm. Arnold	ij	Walap Brabazon	ij
Tho. Jones	iij	Edwa. Freeman	iij
Mr. Whittle, Cler. (Vicarage)	vj		
			05 10

SOUTH STREET WARD.

Thomas Gilbert	iij	Rich. Manox	j
Henry Warner	j	John Roubery	iij
Mary Croone	j	Wm. Baylies	vj
Mathew Rawlings	j	Wm. Hanmore	iij
Margrett Powle	iiij	Rich Pitchar	j
Robert Foord	iiij	Walter Bedford	iij
John Baylies	vj	Wm. King	iij
Eliza Meredith	j	Alex. Koyd	j
John Shove	j	Maudlen Poule	j
Tho. Perkes	iij	Tho. Bayley	j
Edwa. Freeman (Recorder)	v	George Karver	v
Fra. Deran	j	Edwa. Williams	ij
Rich. Payne	j	John Watkin	ij
Jona. Rawlins	iij	Roger Fletcher	iij
James Morris	j	Hugh Bedford	j
Oliver Hacklett	j	John Birch	j
Wm. Hare	j	Mary Loyd	j
Tho. Wood	j	Hen. Glase	j
Eliza Rawlins	j	Rich. Bythall	j
Tho. Weston	j	Walter Bedford	j
Hugh Davis	j	Tho. Richards	j
Wm. Browne	j	Rich. Scudamore	j
Fran. Turnor	iij	Rich. Skynner	j
Adam Medlecott	iij	Tho. Jones	j
			04 14

MIDDLEMARSH WARD.

Higgins James, Esq.	xiiij	John Price	j
Wm. Vernall	j	Stephen Stephens	ij
Ben. Paule	ij	Mag. Skypp	ij
Robt. Smyth	j	Tho. Nash	ij
Simon Seward	vj	—Nash, Vid	ij
Edwa. Vaughan	iij	Maudlen Stephens	ij
Kathe Williams	v	Wm. Ditcher	j
Anne Tomkins	j	Rich. Wanklen	ij
Rich. Nash	ij	—Bach, Vid	ij
John Patsall	iij	Joane Castree	iij
Rich. Price	j	Elitia Rogers	ij
Wm. Garnone	ij	Wm. Patsall	j
John Winde	j	John Jay	iij
Margery Wood	j	Tho. Tyler	ij
Mathew Milward	j	Walter Phillips	ij
Wm. Barnes	iiij	Simon Wined	j
Evan Jones	j	James Caswall	j
Hen. Bryan	j	Margrett Shuter	j
			04 02

HIGH STREET WARD.

Kathe Perks	iiij	John Caswall	ij
Jane Palmer	ij	Wm. Clent	iij
Edwa. Walker	j	John Granes	j
Tho. Foorde	iiij	Rowland Pytt	j
Tho. Tomkins	iij	Jeromy Clarke	j
John Tomkins	iij	John Steade	iiij
Humph Leinthall	iij	Rebecca Seward	vj
Patient* Marre	iiij	Wm. Touldervy	iiij
Anne Stephens	ij	Tho. Eavans	iij
Sam. Seward	j	Tho. Penson	ij

* It is worthy of remark that this is the only Christian Name in this list which bespeaks a Puritan feeling: a fact which strongly attests the general Church and loyal sentiments of the Inhabitants.

Evan Preece	j	John Jacklett	vj
Wm. Mason	iij	John Chubb	j
Jacob Greene	iij	Tho. Yeomans	iij
Henry Bedford	ij	John Walton	ij
Tytos Meredith	j	Hen. Burt	ij
Isaack Greene	ij	Wm. Ketherick	ij
Natha. Smyth	ij	Tho. Penson	ij
Fran. Perse	iiij	Wm. Badnadge	j
Mathew Ford	ij	John Bach	j
			04 14

NETHERMARSH WARD.

Edward Roubery	iij	Rich. Wontner	j
Tho. Barrar	ij	Wm. Cole	ij
Wm. Robins	iij	John Bayley	ij
John Eavans	ij	Tho. Bayley	j
Alexandr Nelmes	iiij	Lewis Prosser	j
Gyles Whittall	ij	John Naish	ij
Samu. Buckles	ij	David Edward	iij
John Alcox	j	Joseph Patsall	iij
Edwa. Prosser	j	Fra. Bushop	ij
Ralph Steade	j	Henry Seward	vj
Ralph Nicolls	ij	Ethelbert Jay	ij
Rich. Davis	j	Fra. Gyles	j
Eliza Winton	j	Mary Crother	j
Reece Morgan	j	Daniell Chitebuck	j
Hugh Butler	j		
			02 15

ETNM STREET WARD.

Jane Dene	iij	Wm. Jones	j
Henry Caswall	iiij	Rich. Rowbery	ij
Tho. Smyth	ij	John Leach	j
John Perkes	ij	Wm. Gyles	j
Mary Nicolls	j	Fra. Woodley	iij
Caleb Moore	iiij	Anne Nicolls	iij

Humph. Wall	j	Wm. Loyd	iij
John Caldwall	ij	—Leath, Vid	j
John Walwine	ij	Wm. Vaston	iiij
Joane Jacksons	j	Joane Powle	ij
Rich. Bach	iiij	John Wyne	ij
Fra. Hay	iij	John Langford	iij
Tho. Spencer	j	Humph Bayley	j
John Gyles	ij	Joane Badham	iij
James Powle	ij	Fra. Osborne	iij
Tho. King	j	His tenant	j
Reece Jones	j	Wm. Bowley	iij
Tho. Scarlet	ij	Edwa. Rawlings	iiij
Walap Brabazon, Esq.	xiij	Tho. Badnedge	j
Maudlen Marbrow	j	David Hare	j
			04 14

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and authentic Extract from the Original Record in the custody of the Master of the Rolls, preserved in the Public Record Office pursuant to the Statute 1 and 2 Vic., c. 94: the same being sealed with the Seal of the said Public Record Office, pursuant to the said Statute.

9 April, 1861. JOSEPH REDINGTON,
Assistant-Keeper of the Public Records.

This Roll contains 224 Houses. According to our former mode of computation, each House may be considered to represent a family of $5\frac{1}{2}$ persons; and we shall thus obtain a rate-paying population in the Borough of 1232 persons. If we add an equal moiety for those who from various causes escaped taxation, we shall have a population of 2464—a slight increase on the population of the preceding century. It is a matter of regret that the loss of the parochial Registers for this period prevents a more accurate testing the testimony of this Hearth-Roll. The calculation derived from it will probably be correct; as the perils

of the times, the slaughter in the various battles between the King and the Parliament, would tend to hinder an increase of the population: and none of those influences which have led in our own day to the rapid augmentation of our people were as yet known or thought of. This Roll is moreover interesting as it gives the names of the Inhabitants according to their Wards, the relative number of chimnies charged to each, and thus shows the proportionate wealth and dignity of the families enrolled in it. The payment contained in this Roll was for half a year.

The Tradesmen of the Town at this time resorted to the use of Tokens, to supply the want of small change for their customers. These tokens were small brass or copper coins, marked with the name, the trade, the initials, and other private devices of those who issued them. They vary in size from the half-farthing to the halfpenny of our ordinary coinage. The privilege was much abused, and after the Restoration several stringent enactments were passed against their use. In 1672, the first real copper coinage of halfpence and farthings was issued; and "these coins, being of the intrinsic values that they were issued for, nearly superseded the private tokens, which no law had been able to put down."*

Several Tokens, issued at Leominster, are yet extant in the hands of various Collectors in the Town and neighbourhood.

1. A Token of the size of a farthing—
   On the obverse side, "JEROMY CLARKE" round the margin; a female figure on a shield, in the centre.
   On the reverse, "IN LEOMINSTER, 1663" round the margin; with the letters $\frac{C.}{I.T.}$ in the centre.
2. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse side,
   "FRAN PERSE, LEOMINSTER, 1666" round the margin: a female figure on a shield, in the centre.
   On the reverse, "FOR NECESSARY CHANGE" round the margin; "HIS HALFE PENNY" in the centre.

* Coinage of the British Empire, p. 122, by H. N. Humphreys.

3. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse, "WILLIAM CLENT, BOOK-" round the margin; with the date "1666" in the centre.
   On the reverse, "SELLER, IN LEOMINSTER," round the margin; with the letters $\frac{C.}{W.E.}$ in the centre.

4. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse, "NATHANIEL SMITH" round the margin; "HIS HALFE PENY" in the centre.
   On the reverse, "OF LEOMINSTER, 1667" round the margin; with the letters $\frac{S.}{N.M.}$ in the centre.

5. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse, "ELIZABETH BEDFORD" round the margin; a plain shield in the centre.
   On the reverse, "IN LEOMINSTER, 1667" round the margin; "HER HALFE PENNY, E. B." in the centre.

6. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse,
   "THO. HARDWICK, JUNIOR, IN" round the margin; a figure of a Buck in the centre.
   On the reverse,
   "LEOMINSTER, HIS HALFE PENNY" round the margin; an interlaced flower between the letters T.H. in the centre.

7. A Token of the size of a halfpenny—
   On the obverse, "IOHN NAISH, GLOVER" round the margin; the Glovers' Arms in the centre.
   On the reverse, "IN LEOMINSTER, 1669" round the margin; "HIS HALFE PENY, $\frac{N.}{I.M.}$" in the centre.

8. A Token of the size of a farthing—
   On the obverse, "IOHN STEAD" round the margin; with a shield in the centre.
   On the reverse, "IN LEOMINSTER" round the margin; with the same shield in the centre.

9. A Token of the size of a farthing—
   On the obverse, "THOMAS FOORDE" round the margin; a female figure crowned, on a shield in the centre.
   On the reverse, "IN LEOMINSTER" round the margin; with the letters $\frac{F.}{T.S.}$ in the centre.

In 1675, the Duke of Buckingham, having already disposed of several portions, at different times, to various purchasers, sold the residue left to him of the Manor of Leominster, with all the rights and privileges conferred on him by the Royal Grant, to Major Wildman.

This gentleman was a complete political adventurer. Promoted by Cromwell, when a young man, to the command of a troop of horse, he quitted the army before the termination of the Commonwealth, devoted himself exclusively to the civil affairs of the state, and intrigued against his former friend, the Lord Protector.* Returned as a member of the various Parliaments summoned by Charles II., he made himself so conspicuous in the plots and cabals prevalent during the latter portion of his reign, that he was obliged for his own safety to escape into Holland; from whence he only returned when assured of the patronage and protection of William III. He probably became acquainted with Mr. Conyngsby in the Parliament at Oxford in 1680, of which they were both members; and this acquaintance led to the re-sale to him some few years later of the Manor of Leominster.

This Parliament, summoned by Charles II. at Oxford in 1680, was a very remarkable one. It was distinguished by two chief characteristics: by the extreme animosity of its members against the Duke of York, and by the shortness of its duration. The King, afraid lest it should pass a Bill for the Exclusion of his brother from the throne, dismissed it at the end of seven days. The pocket Almanack† of Mr. Conyngsby, one of the members for Leominster in this Parliament contains these entries in his own handwriting:—

Monday, ye 21 March, ye 2nd Parliament I was of was opened att Oxford.

Monday, ye 28, ye Parliament was dissolved.

Tuesday, ye 29th, my Ld Scudamore and I left Oxford, and came to Hom on Wednesday, 10 of the clock.

* Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Book XIV.. p. 500, 8vo. Edition.

† This pocket-book of Mr. Conyngsby is in the possession of Mr. Edwin Lloyd. It contains nothing of interest, beyond the names of some few of the members who spoke for or against the Exclusion Bill, and these two entries: "June 19. Agreed wth Mr. Rogers to bring down 3 dozen of chairs by wagon to Worcester, and from thence to this place (Hampton Court) on horseback, and to give him £3 5s."

Memm. To speak at the Election as many jurymen as I can." See p. 162.

It may be, perhaps, worthy of record that these two gentlemen, Mr. Conyngsby and Lord Scudamore, afford a very late, if not the latest example of retaining the Fool or Jester in the household: for in 1683 Mr. Conyngsby had a Jester, one Thomas Williams, called "the Pleasant Fool of Hampton Court:" and at the same time another Jester, called "the Grave Fool of Homme" was kept at Homme Lacy, by Viscount Scudamore.*

The Chamberlain's accounts for 1682-3 afford an example of another custom of the Times. The officers of the Herald's College were used to itinerate the country, and to hold periodically Courts of Visitation in the chief Towns of the various counties. On these occasions persons bearing arms were called upon to prove their title to them, and questions relative to birth, precedency, and armorial distinctions were considered and decided on.

1683. Item—Mr. Sewards his bill for entertainm^{t} of the Heralds at Armes, and his attendance .. 18s. 0d.
P^{d} to the Gentlemen themselves†.. .. £2 0 0

In 1684, the fee-farm Rent of the Borough, £16 17s. 3½d., was sold by the Crown to Mr. Robert Chaplin, from whom it descended to Lord Bateman.

After this abrupt termination of the meeting at Oxford, Charles II. called no more Parliaments during the remainder of his reign. He entered on a new policy, and sought by changing the Magistrates, and by tampering with the Charters of the Boroughs, to secure a Parliament subservient to his wishes. He

* MSS. in the collection of the late Rev. Thos. Bird.

† College of Arms, 10 July, 1861.

My dear Sir,—Upon turning to our last Visitation of Herefordshire, I find that on the 19 Sep., 1683, Henry Dethick, Esq., Richmond Herald, and Gregory King, Esq., Rouge Dragon Pursuivant, visited Leominster, and made a Record of the Common Seal, and a note of the several Charters granted to the Borough, and the powers contained in them; also the names of its Bailiff, High Steward, Recorder, Town Clerk, &c., several of whom sign the Entry, and this is the business, no doubt, which cost the £2. There has been no Visitation since that time. Yours very faithfully,

WILLIAM COURTHOPE, Somerset.

established likewise the custom of "Closetings," that is, of personal interviews in the Royal closet with influential persons, that by an application of bribes or threats he might induce them to accede to his proposals. He tried thus to mould to his purpose Mr. John Dutton Colt, one of the members representing Leominster in Parliament.

Mr. Colt was the eldest son of Geo. Colt, Esq. of Colt Hall, Suffolk, and of Clay Hall and Barenden Hall, in Essex. His father raised at his own expense a body of men from his estates to assist the Royal cause; and took part in the fatal battle of Worcester. On the disastrous issue of that fight he fled into Holland, and was drowned off that coast. His son was saved by the exertions of a servant, and was carried to the English court at Breda, and thus became acquainted with his future Sovereign.

Restored to his country on the accession of Charles II. to the throne, Mr. Colt, in 1670, married the daughter and heiress of John Booth, Esq, of Letton, County of Hereford; and became, in right of his wife, the owner of Dutton House (then called Stafferton House) in Leominster, and of considerable other property in its neighbourhood. He lived at Hereford for the first three years after his marriage, and thence removed to his residence, Dutton House, on the 26th of July, 1673. He was shortly after made a Capital Burgess, and was sent as the representative of the Borough to Parliament. Although a Royalist by birth, education, and conviction, yet with the true spirit of an English gentleman, he refused at the request even of his Sovereign to betray the privileges of his townsmen, or to sacrifice the liberties which he had sworn* to defend. Charles II., on one occasion

* The Oath of a Capital Burgess, taken by Mr. Colt:—"You shall swear that you will be true and faithful to our Sovereign Lord the King, his heirs and lawful successors, and to your power shall assist the Bailiff, Justices of the Peace, and other officers within this Borough for the time being, and to them shall be obedient and attendant concerning such things as they or any of them shall lawfully and reasonably will or command you to do. You shall also well and truly observe, perform, fulfill, and keep all such orders and rules as are and shall be made and established by the Common Council of this Borough for the good government thereof in all things to you appertaining. You shall

of these closetings, shewed him two Bills of £10,000 each on Alderman Blackwell and Sir Charles Duncombe, his Bankers, and promised* to give them to him, if he would surrender to him the Charter of the Borough of Leominster, which had been committed to his keeping. Colt, however, continued firm in his refusal, and thereby exposed himself to the vengeance of the King. Certain injudicious expressions, in reference to the Duke of York, spoken at a banquet at Mr. Conyngsby's, his colleague, at Hampton Court, were made the grounds of an indictment. A charge ("Scandalum Magnatum" as it was called) was brought against him. He was accused of treason, in that he struck with his cane one of the pillars of the Market Cross, and said "the Duke of York is a Papist, and before any such Papist dog shall be successor to the Crown, I will be hanged at my door."†

The trial was brought to an issue before the notorious Judge Jefferies, on the 3rd of May, 1664. The jury, as might have been expected under such a Judge on such a charge, brought in a verdict of Guilty, and assessed the damages at the enormous sum of £100,000. Mr. Colt, on his loss of this trial, concealed himself for some time in a hiding place curiously contrived in a chimney of Dutton House, but at last surrendered to the the Crown, and was committed to the King's Bench Prison.‡

from time to time keep all the lawful secrets of the Common Council of the said Borough, whereunto you are elected. You shall also give, yield and be contributory with the Corporation of this Borough, so far forth as you ought or shall be chargeable to do. And you shall not by colour of your freedom bear out or serve under any foreign person or stranger, but according to your skill with cunning and the best of your power you shall uphold and maintain the liberties, franchises, good customs, orders, and usages of this Borough. So help you God."

* The poet Pope may be almost supposed to be speaking of these closetings in his lines:—

"But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
And tempts by making rich, not making poor."

† Rapin: Vol II., p. 721. See also, for the history of Mr. Colt, Lodge's Sketches and Playfair's Baronetage.

‡ There are several inaccuracies in Mr. Price's account of this imprisonment of Mr. Colt. He says that "Mr. Colt was 10 years in the King's Bench." He was not imprisoned till after his trial in 1684, and was released by James

Shortly after this imprisonment of Mr. Colt, the King, on the 15th of January, 1685, issued a new Charter to the Borough of Leominster, in which he reduced the number of Burgesses from 24 to 15, in the hope of being able to influence this smaller number, so that they might return members conformable to the wishes of the Court. Within three weeks of this date, on February 6th, 1685, King Charles II. died, and so suddenly that a rumour prevailed that he was poisoned.

James II., on his accession to the throne, summoned a Parliament for the 19th of May, 1685. He fully hoped to find that his brother's plans, which had been pursued steadily and perseveringly during the preceding five years would have proved effectual to the securing a Parliament, which should conform to the wishes of the Sovereign. He found himself, however, grievously disappointed, and not content with frequent prorogations, he exercised what he called a Dispensing Power. He sent to many Towns and Boroughs an order from himself for removing by virtue of his Royal prerogative certain members of the Corporation, and placing others in their stead: so that he might control the election, and secure the return of representatives. The Records of the Corporation contain three distinct and separate, but quickly consecutive orders from the King for the arbitrary removal of some of the Burgesses, and for the equally arbitrary substitution at his own will and pleasure of others in their room, contrary to the accustomed liberties and franchises of the Borough. These mandates were all issued within the last six months of his reign, in 1688.

The first is an order for the ejection from their offices of certain of the Burgesses.

II., previous to his abdication of the throne, Dec. 10, 1688; so that his imprisonment did not exceed three years. Mr. Price also says that "he was twice returned for Leominster during his imprisonment." This could not be, for there was only one Parliament, viz., that of 1685, summoned during the interval of his imprisonment; and Price himself places Mr. Conyngsby and Mr. Robert Cornwall as the representatives of Leominster in that Parliament. Price's History, p. 146.

"At the Court at Whitehall, the 8th of Aprill, 1688.

"Present: The King's most excellent Maty in Councill.

"Whereas by the Charter granted to the Town of Leominster in the County of Hereford a power is reserved to his Maty by his order in Council to remove from their employment any Officers in the said Town, his Maty in Councill is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered that Richard Hodges, Thomas Harris, and John Aldred, Justices of the Peace and Capital Burgesses, John Tompkins, William Baylis, and Jeremy Clarke, Capital Burgesses, Thomas Stead, Town Clerke, and Thomas Price, Chamberlain, be, and they are hereby, removed and displaced from their aforesaid offices in the said Town of Leominster.

WILLIAM BLATHWAYT."

The second of these is an order from the President of the Privy Council for the appointment of certain new Burgesses to the places of those lately ejected.

"JAMES R.—Trusty and well-beloved, We greet you well. Whereas We have by our Order in Councill thought fit to remove Richard Hodges, Thomas Harris, and John Aldred from being Justices of the Peace and Capitall Burgesses of that our Burrough of Leominster, John Tomkins, William Baylis, and Jeremy Clerke from being Capitall Burgesses, Thomas Stead from being Town Clerke, and Thomas Price from being Chamberlain of Our said Burrough, We have thought fit hereby to will and require you forthwith to elect and admit Our trusty and well-beloved John Streel, Esq., Henry Seaward, and John Caswald to be Justices of the Peace and Capitall Burgesses, John Cornwall, Gent., Henry Browne, and James Powell to be Capitall Burgesses, Gray Elliott to be Town Clerke, and Jeremy Clarke to be Chamberlain of our said Burrough in the room of the persons above-mentioned, without administering unto them any oath or oaths, but the usuall oath for the execution of their respective places, with which we are pleased to dispense in this behalfe. And for so doing this shall be your Warrant. And so we bid you farewell. Given at Our Court at Whitehall the

18th day of Aprill, 1688, in the fourth yeare of Our Reigne.

By his Majtys Command,

Burrough of Leominster. SUNDERLAND. P."

Mr. Jeremy Clark accepted the office to which he was thus appointed. His account, as Chamberlain, commences (within a few days of the date of this order) on May 2nd, 1688. The first item contained in it is this:—

Pd the Messenger that brought the King's mandate £6 9s. 0d.

These proceedings of the King, therefore, were not only unpopular on account of their arbitrary character, but also as they involved the Corporation in considerable charges.

Mr. Clarke held his office about eight months. On the flight of James II. he resigned. The Bailiff and Corporation resumed their rights and elected Mr. Bach as his successor in December, 1688. His accounts, yet extant, contain these entries, illustrative of the incidences of those times.

	£	s.	d.
Dec. 24th, 1688. Pd Roger Hare, for him and his horse to Bewdley and Worcester for intelligence		9	0
Pd Edward Pearse, for cole to the Guard.. ..	1	3	0
Fagots for Do		1	8
Five Tunnes of cole for Do	3	10	0

The third order of the King is a simple ejection of four other Burgesses, and a substitution of a like number in their places.

"JAMES, R.—Trusty and well-beloved, We greet you well. Whereas We have by our order in Councill thought fit to remove Humphrey Lawrence, Thomas Jones, Oliver Hackitt, and Edward Hayse from being Capital Burgesses of that our burrough of Leominster; We have thought fit hereby to will and require you forthwith to elect and admit our trusty and well-beloved Thomas Penke, Thomas Hare, Thomas Gilbert, and George Carver to be Capitall Burgesses of our said Burrough in the room of the persons above-mentioned without administering unto them any oath or oaths but the usual oath for the execution of their said places with which We are pleased to dispense in this behalfe. And for so doing this shall be your warrant. And so We bid

you farewell. Given at our Court at Whitehall the 12th day of May, 1688, in the fourth yeare of our Reigne.

By his Majtys command,

SUNDERLAND. P."

It is a matter of congratulation to the historian to relate that all the Inhabitants of Leominster did not imitate the example of subserviency set them by Mr. Jeremy Clarke. This third order of the King met with a quiet but effectual opposition. One of those nominated in this last mandate had courage and public spirit enough to decline the honour, and to refuse to discharge the office assigned him. Thomas Hare, nominated by the King on the 12th of May, 1688, a Burgess of the Town, put in this solemn and wary resignation of the office on the 21st day of the same month of May, 1688.

"To the worspfull the Bayliffe of the Borough of Leominster, and the rest of the Capitall Burgesses of the said Borough.

"These are to certify you that I, Thomas Hare, of the said Borough, being formerly nominated and elected into the fraternity of the Capitall Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid doe hereby certify that I, the said Thomas Hare, doe upon things best knowne to my selfe heerby freely, willingly, and of my own accord, resigne up my place of Capitall Burgesse. Witness my hand the one and twentieth day of May, Ano Dom., 1688.

THOMAS HARE."

Thus, on this occasion, the arbitrary and unconstitutional measures of the King were frustrated by the quiet though determined refusal of his Nominee to accept the office to which he had appointed him.

The same spirit that animated Thomas Hare prevailed throughout the whole Kingdom. The purposes of James were everywhere defeated. The same determined resistance was alike offered in the camp, court, senate, church, and country.

The King, convinced too late of the folly of his advisers, tried to retrace his steps, and to regain the lost confidence of his subjects. He proposed various courses of conciliation and

concession. In this spirit he listened with a gracious ear to the entreaties made by Lord Preston in behalf of Mr. Colt, and released him from his imprisonment. The following dramatic conversation ensued when Mr. Colt attended at Court to return thanks for the favour shown him. The King remarked that he was turned grey, and expressed his surprise, as Mr. Colt was by some years the younger. On Mr. Colt replying that trouble altered the appearance of all men, the King kindly bade him to go home and to live peaceably in the country. Mr. Colt said that such was his intention, and that he might carry it out effectually, begged of his Majesty that he would never put him into any public employment. The King smiled, and giving him his hand said that he would do as he desired, and that it was the only favour of that kind, which he had ever asked of him. These conciliatory measures of James II. were adopted too late. His arbitrary and selfish policy was avenged on himself in the loss of his throne and kingdom by the Revolution of 1688.

The call of William III., Prince of Orange, to the throne of England was not only an important era in our National History, but was fraught with momentous consequences to the future happiness and good government of a large portion of mankind. It secured and placed on a safer basis the liberties and constitutional privileges of Englishmen; and led, under the direction of Divine Providence, to England assuming a new position, and exerting henceforth a greater influence among the nations of the earth. Previously to this event England, content with its island isolation, had kept comparatively aloof, and had scarcely joined the Comity of Continental nations. From the date of this event she became the chief mainspring, the source and director of all the important political combinations in Europe; and commenced that intimate connection with the general system of foreign politics, which led to her gradual assumption of a foremost position among modern nations; to the progressive development of her resources, to the rapid but effectual growth of her power, to the eventual

establishment of her supremacy and dominion throughout vast districts of the earth. The first link in this chain of mighty consequences, the first germ of the present widely extended rule of England was this summons by its nobles and people of William to the throne; and thus, while they secured in an extreme emergency their own liberties, they were working out the predetermined plans of the Almighty Ruler; and were affording proofs that of nations, as well as individuals

Providence doth shape the ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Landing at Torbay, Nov. 5, 1688, William was received with peculiar favour by the Western Counties of England. The Inhabitants of Leominster, both Churchman and Nonconformist, were united in adherence to his cause. These items occur as charges for the rejoicings in 1689.

	£	s.	d.
P^{d} Samuel Seaward for a hogshead of Syder ..	1	10	0
P^{d} Mr. Spenser, 1 of Ale, 1 of Syder	3	0	0

The representatives of Leominster, Mr. Colt and Mr. Conyngsby, proved themselves throughout his whole reign the warmest friends and supporters of William III. Shortly after his peaceful occupation of the throne, Mr. Colt produced the old Charter, and under it the full complement of Burgesses was restored, and the Borough resumed all its antient privileges. King William sent for Mr. Colt on this occasion, and asked him by what law he acted in this matter of the Charter. He replied, "By that same law by which your Majesty wears your Crown." Mr. Colt was returned in many successive Parliaments during the reigns of William and of Anne. He lived in Dutton House, and at the age of 80 passed away, as a shock of corn fully ripe, much respected and regretted by his fellow Townsmen, A.D. 1723.

Mr. John Dutton Colt was not the only one of his family who attained political distinction. His third brother, William Dutton, was Master of the Horse to Prince Rupert, and Envoy to the Court of Hanover under William III. He rendered signal service to that Monarch by discovering Gradnall's design to murder him,

and received at his hands the honour of knighthood, with permission to change his arms, a colt at gaze, to three colts at full speed, in allusion to the arms of Hanover. This William Colt died at Hanover. His fourth brother, Mr. Henry Colt, represented the city of Westminster in Parliament, and was made a Baronet, by the title of Sir Harry Dutton Colt of Westminster, on the 6th of March, 1691, for services rendered to the King at the Revolution. On his decease the title came into the direct family of Mr. John Dutton Colt, in the person of his grandson,* and has continued in his family in direct succession from that time to the present.

The fullness of the Royal favour was reserved for the other celebrated representative of Leominster, the "first and the last" Earl Conyngsby. This extraordinary man was the author of his own fortunes, under circumstances in early life singularly inauspicious. Descended from an antient but impoverished family, possessed of an extensive but burdened estate, left in early years without parental control, compelled rather than persuaded to marry the daughter of his own guardian, Mr. Conyngsby in his later years retrieved his estate, allied himself in marriage with the highest in the land, and won for himself in the face of his early disadvantages much political distinction and respect.

Immediately on his coming of age he was returned as member for Leominster, and represented this Borough in 14 Parliaments, to all of which he was chosen, according to his own narrative, "whether absent or present, without trouble or expense." He was, during the whole period, a firm and unflinching Whig. He voted in the Oxford Parliament of 1680, for the exclusion of the Duke of York from the succession; and rendered an active support to the Revolution of 1688. He was, moreover, in 1690, fortunate enough to assist in saving the life of William III. during

* Mr. John Dutton Colt was twice married: first to Mary, daughter and heiress of John Booth, Esq., of Letton, County of Hereford, who died Feb. 15, 1702, and had five sons and four daughters; and secondly to Margaret, relict of John Arnold of Llanvihangel, County of Monmouth. John Dutton Colt's eldest son predeceased both his father and his uncle, and left a son who became the second Baronet.

the contest that ensued in Ireland with the adherents of the Stewarts. "The day before the battle of the Boyne, whilst the King was reconnoitring the enemy, a field piece was pointed at him. A soldier and two horses were killed by his side, and he was slightly wounded in the shoulder. Mr. Conyngsby with his handkerchief bound up the wound."* For this valuable service he was knighted by the King, and appointed one of the Chief Justices for Ireland. He was instrumental in bringing to a successful issue the "Treaty of Limerick," Oct. 3, 1691, which terminated the war, and led to the retirement from Ireland of Baron Ginkle, the commander of the forces for King James. Sir Thomas Conyngsby, for his services in the conduct of this treaty, was ennobled by the King in 1692, by the title of Lord Conyngsby of Clanbrasil. In this same year, during his residence in Ireland, he purchased of Major Wildman for the sum of £3060 the rights and lordship of the Manor of Leominster. This purchase was an unfortunate event for him, as it caused him much trouble and anxiety, and gave to some extent a colour and complexion to his future life. He paid too high a price for it, and bought it under the impression that he would become invested under the Royal grant with much larger privileges, authority, and rights, than the ownership of the Manor really conferred on him. Instead of acknowledging himself to have been deceived by the representations of Major Wildman, he persevered with constitutional obstinacy through a long series of years in vindicating his supposed claims, and thereby involved himself in vexatious, indiscriminate, expensive, and unsuccessful lawsuits.

During the reign of William III. Lord Conyngsby lent an active aid to all the measures of the Court. On the accession of Queen Anne he retired for a season from Parliament and from all public duties, as he disapproved of the policy and proceedings adopted by the Ministers of the Queen. With the location of the house of Hanover on the throne he resumed his seat, and

* Smollett's History of England.

took a frequent part in the debates of Parliament, and was particularly virulent in his animosity and prosecution of the late Ministers. When Mr. Walpole impeached Lord Bolingbroke for his intrigues during the reign of Anne in favour of the son of James II., Lord Conyngsby pressed the necessity of including Lord Oxford in the accusation. "The worthy member" he said has impeached the hand, but I impeach the head; he has impeached the clerk, but I the justice; he has impeached the scholar, but I the master; I impeach Robert, Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, of high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors."*

Feelings of a long standing private pique and of personal†

* Lord Oxford met the accusations against him with the firm consciousness of innocency. "He was so supported by the Almighty, that notwithstanding the very great pains of the gravel and rheumatism, under which he then laboured, his defence of his royal mistress, the liberty of the Peers, and his own, was maintained with so much firmness of mind, that the speech he then made fetched tears either of rage or of compassion from the greatest of his enemies, the Duke of Marlborough himself saying that he could not but envy him, who under such circumstances could talk in such a manner with so much resolution. He came from the House of Lords to his own house at St. James's between 11 and 12 o'clock at night and, though under the custody of the Black Rod, was followed from Westminster to St. James's with the hurras of the people."

"Lord Oxford, during two years detention in the Tower, maintained his conviction of an ultimate deliverance. He refused to avail himself of his opportunities of flight, and constantly pressed for his trial, when at last the impeachment was entirely dropped by the Commons. He could even meet Lord Conyngsby's animosity in a spirit of wit and pleasantry: for when told that Lord Conyngsby had said "he would have his head," he replied, "I am sorry that I cannot return the compliment, for I would not have his at a gift."—From Auditor Harley's MS. Notes in the collection of Lady Frances Harcourt.

† Several instances of this personal rivalry between the families of Conyngsby and Harley are mentioned by Auditor Harley in his MS. Notes on the life of his brother, Lord Oxford. He mentions one instance of opposition to his father at the commencement of the reign of William III.

"Among others, directions were given to prevent Sir E. Harley and his son being chosen in the ensuing Parliament, which was undertaken by the new Lord Conyngsby and Sir Rowland Gwyn; in the which they succeeded against Sir E. H. by the most base and perfidious artifice."

He records further opposition at the commencement of the reign of George I.

"This, with a great sum of money that was issued, had the desired effect in the Elections, which were carried on with the utmost violence and partiality.

and family rivalry against Lord Oxford, whose parliamentary interests and territorial influence in the County of Hereford had been frequently opposed to his own, united with his strong political affection to prompt Lord Conyngsby in these proceedings. He obtained the reward of his zeal for the reigning family by an accumulation of honours. He was appointed Lord Lieutenant for the County in 1715; Paymaster of the forces in 1716; and finally, in 1719, was raised to the English Peerage by the title of Earl Conyngsby, with remainder to his eldest daughter by his second marriage.

The speeches of Lord Conyngsby were full of heat and violence,* and were delivered as if he were in a passion. Shortly after his elevation to the House of Lords he spoke with his usual characteristic bluntness, and received this sharp rebuke from Bishop Atterbury. The Bishop had said in the debate on a certain bill, that "he had foretold the consequences of its introduction during the preceding session, and was sorry to find that he had proved a true prophet." Earl Conyngsby tartly remarked that "he did not know to what prophet the Rt. Rev. Prelate could be likened, except to the Prophet Balaam who was reproved by his own ass." "As the noble Lord" replied Atterbury "hath discovered a similitude in our manners, I am well content to be compared to the Prophet Balaam; but I am at a loss how to make out the other part of the parallel. I am sure that I have been reproved by no one but by his Lordship."

The Lord Conyngsby, who in the beginning of King Willlam's reign had undertaken to keep Sir E[dward] H[arley] out of Parliament, again undertakes this with regard to the whole family. In Radnorshire he succeeded according to his desire, [Lord Harley, the Earl of Oxford's son, was the candidate] and Mr. Fowler was returned for the county; but the election of Lemster, where I had the least reason to expect success, had a quite contrary turn. [Here insert the whole affair of the Election at Leominster, the attempts to take away the Charter, and all the proceedings thereupon.]"—Notes for private history of Earl of Oxford in MS. by Mr. Auditor Harley, in the possession of Lady Frances Harcourt.

* "The House impeach him; Conyngsby harangues:
The Court forsake him; and Sir Balaam hangs."
Pope's Moral Essays, Epist. III., l. 397.

The most remarkable speech of Lord Conyngsby was that addressed to the Mayor and Corporation of Hereford in the year 1718.

"Mr. Mayor, your servant; Gentlemen, yours. I will have you to know I am your Lord Lieutenant, and Custos Rotulorum of this county, and Lord High Steward of this city, and I'll do what I please with both you and your city. I hear some of you are for the Pretender, a fellow whom his own mother has disowned, and I am informed when a lady of the strictest virtue and best reputation would have deposed upon oath that an impudent rascal said "this fellow was the rightful heir to the Crown," you refused to take her deposition. I speak to you, Mr. Mayor, and you, Mr. Taylor, that art a Jacobite, a fellow without a soul. I am also informed that a pack of wretches, one whereof is an Exciseman, another of them that eats the King's bread, met in the Market-place upon the 10th of June, and drank the Pretender's health, and proclaimed him King. I hear you had oaken boughs and white roses.* There are but three honest men in your town, which, to their honour be it spoken, are Tom Bailey, Dr. Lewis, and Mr. Birch. As for myself, I have opposed this fellow's father; I have opposed the son; and tho' King George be the best King that ever sate upon the throne, but I'll oppose him too, if he should pretend to alter our laws and constitution. Look ye, gentlemen, I had a design to be your friend, and not have sent you any soldiers: the last were civil gentlemen. But, do you hear, take care to prosecute this rascal of a butcher: if you do, I'll take care of a jury: if not, I will send you soldiers that shall use you as you ought to be used. So I wish you farewell."

This speech was interspersed with oaths, curses, and expletives of the most monstrous kind, and was delivered by a Lord Lieutenant, in virtue of his high office, to the Mayor and Corporation

* These were both popular emblems of the Stewarts. "The Guards are set to watch the streets, and prevent the people wearing white roses. I read presently of a couple of soldiers almost flogged to death for wearing oak boughs in their hats on the 29th of May, another badge of the beloved Stewarts."—Thackeray's Lecture on the Georges, p. 16, in the Cornhill Magazine.

waiting on him in state, surrounded by their fellow Townsmen, and attended by their office bearers. What an unenviable contrast does it afford to that much more preferable interchange of courtesies and compliments with which such an interview would in these days be accompanied!

Lord Conyngsby, while taking an active part in public affairs, was no less incessantly employed in his own private business. His peculiar temptation and idiosyncrasy, almost amounting to a monomania, was his overestimation of the privileges of which he became possessed by his twofold purchase of the Manors of Leominster and Marden. He maintained that the Royal grant to the Duke of Buckingham, which was vested in himself by his purchase from Major Wildman, gave him a claim to the exercise of a supreme and almost royal power* in the Town of Leominster; and that the purchase, direct from the Crown, of the Manor of Marden, entitled him as the Lord of the Manor to certain fines and renewals, on the nonpayment of which the properties reverted entirely to himself. The vindication of these claims involved him in three separate and prolonged lawsuits with the Bailiff and Burgesses of Leominster, with the Proprietors in the Manor of Marden, and with the Crown. The first suit was the least considerable. The following entries occur in relation to it in the Minute Books of the Corporation.

"November 1st, 1720. Ordered, That a letter be sent to the Lord Conyngsby in answer to his demand made on the Bailiff of the Cross Chamber to hold his Sessions in, and other demands made on the Court House, relating to the fines and amerciments, and that the Recorder be consulted on the same."

* The words of the grant were very full. The Manor was granted "in as ample a manner and forme as We or any of our Ancestors or Predecessors, late Kings or Queens of England, had held or enjoyed, or ought to have held and enjoyed, the Lordship, Mannors, Burrough, Granges, Rectories, Farms, Advowsons, Parks, Messuages, Lands, Tenements, and all other singular the Premises aforesaid by these Presents granted." Lord Conyngsby has annexed in his own handwriting to the transcript of this grant these words, "as any King or Queen ever enjoyed."

"November 10th, 1720. Ordered, That a verbal answer be given to his Lordship's demand concerning the use of the Cross Chamber by the Bailiff."

"December 28. Ordered, That the Town Clerk do write to Sir Geo. Caswall to desire that he will attend the Attorney General to know when and where he will be attended by Council to argue the caveat entered against Lord Conyngsby."

This suit appears to have been speedily and amicably settled.

The Chamber Book contains this order: "Nov. 12, 1722. Ordered, That the Chamberlain does pay to the Town Clerk sixteen pounds to discharge Mr. Hancock's bill of charge on the Corporation adversus Earl Conyngsby, and take a discharge from the Town Clerk for the same, and that the money be paid before or at Christmas next."

Within a few months Earl Conyngsby was received as the guest of the Corporation. "April 15, 1723. Ordered, That the Chamberlain pay Mr. Eysam's bill of £5 for wine and drink drank at his house when Lord Conyngsby came to Leominster."

At this period of reconciliation and peace, Lord Conyngsby presented to the Bailiff and Burgesses the two silver Maces,* carried to this day, on state occasions, before the Mayor as Chief Magistrate.

Oct. 10, 1723. P^d^ John Pearse, for bringing down the Macys .. .. 16s. 6d.

* These Maces are very handsome. The handle of each is one foot, nine inches in length, and divided into three compartments by a raised circular boss. The portion between each boss is tooled with foliations of oakleaves and acorns. The summit of each Mace is surmounted by a large Imperial Crown, and underneath the canopy of the Crown are the Royal Arms in relief. Around the circular margin are the letters W and M interlaced, and forming a kind of knot: alternated with the arms of Conyngsby (3 conies sejeant on a shield below a Baron's coronet), and with a lion rampant (on a shield), bearing in its paw a fleece, with these words, "Leominstre Burgus." These words are engraven on the lowest circle of the cup of the Crown, "The gift of the Rt. Honble Thomas Lord Conyngsby to ye Burrough of Leominster."

These Maces were probably ordered long before they were presented to the Borough, as they bear the Baron's, not the Earl's, Coronet. See p. 160.

These amicable terms, thus re-established between the Corporation and Lord Conyngsby, did not long remain unbroken. The following entry shows that their eccentric and noble neighbour very soon resumed his claims of lordship and authority within the Borough, to be met with an equally determined opposition and resistance.

"Saturday, 13th day of June, 1724. Ordered, That a Petition be sent to the King's most Excellent Ma^{tie} to represent the grievances of the Borough from the usurped power of ye Right Hon^{ble} Thomas Earl Coningsby, and that the most noble James Duke Chandos may present the same to his Ma^{tie}.

Voted, nemine contradicente."

The suit relative to the Manor of Marden was prosecuted for sometime with much perseverance. Lord Conyngsby maintained that, as Lord of the Manor, he had a right to certain payments from all the owners of lands within its boundaries, on the failing of which the lands reverted to the Lord. He published "His Case"* in a large folio volume, containing 737 pages of closely printed matter. He states with infinite research and learning, interspersed with his usual passionate invectives, the various antient owners and freeholders of the Manor; the different spoliations to which it had been subject from successive Stewards, and from the peculations of Wroth Rogers, the Parliamentary Governor of Hereford; the more immediate personal injuries practised, during his minority, on his family and himself by his relatives and servants; and the reasons for which he brings against certain proprietors a summary action of ejectment. His learning was displayed, and his arguments were urged in vain. The verdict was given against him, and the claims of the Lord were restricted within narrower limits than Lord Conyngsby's ambition would aspire to.

The most vexatious suit was that which Lord Conyngsby prosecuted for the space of twenty years with the Crown, as to

* Lord Conyngsby's Case of the Manor of Marden.

his right to present a Clerk to the Vicarage of Leominster. He published "His Case" in this instance also, in two separate publications.* He sets forth at great length, and with much erudition, by a long chain of charters, grants, briefs, and confirmations, the rights of the Abbot of Reading, and of the Prior of the Cell of Leominster, as the representative of the Abbot, to nominate a Clerk to the Vicarage. He maintains by the terms of the grant of James I., 1620, that these rights were transferred intact to the Marquis of Buckingham; that they were sold by him without infringement or diminution to Major Wildman, and from him transferred with the purchase of the Manor to himself. Lord Conyngsby, however, claimed not only the right to present to the Vicarage of Leominster, but to all the Churches within the antient bounds of the Manor, (viz.,) to Eyton, Kimbolton, Brimfield, Hope, Stoke, Docklow, Yarpole, and Lucton. He most liberally offered, should he establish his right of presentation, to endow these various Churches.

"And whereas all the said Churches and Chapels are yet destitute of a competent maintenance for a Minister, by reason whereof many are, and have been, served by men of ill morals, now, therefore, in order to have my Tenants in this extensive Manor of Lempster religiously instructed in their duty to God, to King George, their rightful and lawful Sovereign, and to their Country, I, Thomas Earl Conyngsby, propose and promise for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, to the Governors of Q. A. Bounty, to advance and pay the sum of £1,200, to be laid out for a perpetual augmentation of the Vicarage and Chapels hereinafter mentioned."

During the progress of this suit the violent temper of Lord Conyngsby, which could brook no opposition, displayed itself at

* "Proofs to make good my Case relative to the Vicaridge of Lempster."

"An Abstract of Earl Conyngsby's Title to Royal franchises within his Liberty of Leominster, in the County of Hereford, with reference to the several grants, &c."

The publications of Earl Conyngsby are very scarce. They were all bought up after his death by the surviving members of his family.

several times. On one occasion he endeavoured to take a compulsory possession of part of the lands attached to the Vicarage. The accompanying letter, written to the Archdeacon of Hereford, gives an account of the transaction.

"Leominster, February 14th, 1713.

"Honoured Sir,—I am ashamed to give you further trouble than what my last has done, but this now unexpected occasion, when read, I hope will plead my pardon.

"The Church of Leominster was endowed, as appears by a copy of her endowment, and the use of them ever since, with the Parsonage House, the Churchyard, and the glebe of Hope under Dinmore, in value about three pounds per annum, the Parish in which my Lord Conings by's seat of Hampton is; but his Lordship has personally commanded the Tenant there to quit the house and lands, ordering the Tenant to tell me too that a Vicar of Leominster had no more right to a manse and glebe there than to his estate, and should as soon have one as the other; an encroachment, had I institution, how chargeable soever the burthen proved, I would not suffer; but how to relieve a Church in danger to be so disturbed, without the power I cannot tell. Therefore I humbly beg that my Lord Bishop may know my Lord Conyngsby's attempt, and that you would be pleased in pity to a wounded Church, to give such directions as your wiser judgment shall suggest necessary to be used.

"My Lord Bishop having reposed the care of this Church in me during its sequestration, on second thoughts I found it my duty to represent this grievance too to his Lordship by this post, and beg you would be pleased to confer with his Lordship how to act in it.

Your Honour's most obliged and most obedient humble servant, L. STEPHENS."

On another occasion he indulged, in connection with this suit in the House of Lords, in such violent language towards the Lord Chancellor Harcourt, that he was committed as a prisoner

to the Tower, and only released on his privilege as a peer on the prorogation of Parliament.*

This third suit also terminated unfavourably to Lord Conyngsby, and the Vicarage of Leominster continues to this day to be in the Presentation of the Crown.

In furtherance of these lawsuits Lord Conyngsby collected with indefatigable industry and vast expence a voluminous mass of very valuable records, such as charters, grants, court rolls, confirmations of grants, &c. He employed Mr. Ansted, the Garter King of Arms, in transcribing these documents, and preserved them with great care in the "Evidence Room," as it was called, of his mansion at Hampton Court. Dr. Stukely, in his "Iter Curiosum," gives the only information left in relation to them. "His Lordship showed us in his study four or five vast books in manuscript, being transcripts out of the Record Offices, relating to his manors, royalties, estates, and muniments, which cost him £500 in writing and fees.† Here are two new stone staircases of the geometrical method, with a view, I suppose, of security from fire. The Record room is at the top of a tower arched with stone, and paved with Roman brick."

Dr. Stukely gives this interesting account of his visit to Hampton Court:‡—

"We were entertained by my Lord Conyngsby at his seat of Hampton Court. At dinner time one of the antient bards in

* "1720. February 27. Earl Coningesby for a libel on the Lord Chancellor relative to the Vicarage of Leominster."—Bayley's Tower of London, p. 606.

† These rare collections (it is much to be regretted,) have been dispersed or lost. Some of these volumes, beautifully bound in white vellum, and marked with the coronet, supporters, and arms of Earl Conyngsby, are to be found in the collection of the late Rev. J. Bird of Mordiford. A very valuable volume also, similarly bound, is in the possession of Mr. James Bedford, Alderman of the Borough. This volume is marked as forming one of a series. It contains writs, charters, confirmations, grants, affidavits, quietuses, rent rolls, transcripts from Doomesday Book, &c. All the documents preserved in it relate exclusively to the Borough and the antient Manor of Leominster.

‡ Iter. IV., p. 72.

an adjacent room played to us upon the harp, and at proper intervals threw in many notes of his voice with a swelling thrill after a surprising manner, much in the tone of a flute. This is a fine seat, built by our countryman, Harry of Bolingbroke,* afterwards Henry IV. It is castle-like, situated in a valley on a rapid river under coverture of Dynmaur. The gardens, very pleasant, (the finest greens I ever saw) terminated by vast woods covering all the side of the hill, whose wavy tops, when agitated by the wind, entertained the eye with a vast agreeable spectacle and verdant theatric concavity, as high and as far as you could well see. Here is a great command of water on all sides of the house for fountains, basons, canals. Within are excellent pictures of the Earl's ancestors and others by the best hands, Holbein, Dobson, Vandyke, Sir P. Lely, &c. There is an original of the Founder, Henry IV., of Queen Elizabeth, of the Duchess of Portsmouth. The windows of the Chapel are well painted; some images of the Conyngsbys. After dinner my Lord did us the honour to ride with us into the Park, which for beauty, diversity and use is very fine. It is eight miles in circumference, and has all the variety of scenes you can imagine. About 1200 head of deer in it. There are extensive prospects, on one side

* Hampton was part of the domain of the Mortimers. After the attainder of Roger Mortimer, the first Earl of March, in 1330, it passed to Richard Fitz-Allen, Earl of Arundel, one of the heroes of Creci; who, in the latter part of the reign of Richard II., was, in 1397, unjustly impeached of treason and executed. At his death Hampton reverted to the Crown.

On King Richard's deposition the Earl's son, Thomas Fitz-Allen, was restored in blood and to his paternal estates. He died without issue, and his sisters became his co-heirs. One of them, (the third,) the Lady Margaret, married Sir Rowland Leinthall, whose family were seated at Leinthall Earls, Leinthall Starkes, and Monkland Abbey. This Sir Rowland was "Maister of the Wardrobe" unto Henry IV. He accompanied his Sovereign to France, and, having an important command at the battle of Agincourt, made so many prisoners, that by their ransoms on his return home he built "a passing faire house at Hampton Court." His wife, the Lady Margaret, dying, Sir Rowland Leinthall married secondly Lucie Gray, daughter of Richard, fourth Baron Gray of Codnor. By this lady he left two daughters; Catharine, who married Lord Zouch, and died without issue, and Elizabeth, who married Sir Thomas

into Worcestershire, and another over the Welsh mountains. There are lawns, groves, canals, hills, plains. There is a pool three-quarters of a mile long, very broad, included between two great woods. The dam that forms it across a valley cost £800, and was made in a fortnight by 200 hands. There is a new river cut quite through the Park, the channel of which for a long way together is hewn out of a rock. This stream enriches with derivative channels vast tracts of land before barren. Here are new gardens and canals laid out, and new plantations, and timber in proper places, to complete its pleasures. Warrens, decoys, sheep-paths, pastures for cattle, and the like, entirely supply the house with all necessaries and conveniences without recourse to a market."

Lord Conyngsby was twice married, first to Barbara, daughter of Captain Gorges of Eye, his guardian; and secondly to Lady Frances Jones, daughter and co-heiress of the Earl of Ranelagh, an active politician during the reign of Queen Anne. He was as fortunate in his second, as he had been unfortunate in his first marriage. The death of his Countess in 1714-15 was a severe trial. This honourable testimony to her virtues is written in the Register of the Church of Hope-under-Dinmore, on the page that records her death.

"1714-15. Feb. 23rd. Then was buried the Rt. Honble. Frances Lady Conyngsby, the second wife of Thomas Lord

Cornwall, Baron of Burford; and by this marriage Hampton passed into the Cornwall family, with whom it remained for two descents only; Sir Thomas Cornwall, their grandson, having sold it to Humphry Conyngsby, a Judge in the time of Henry VI., and thus Hampton Court came to the Conyngsbercs, of whom Camden speaks as "men of good worship and great name in this part, who have now a good long time inhabited it."

Earl Conyngsby, the last male representative of the Conyngsbyes, had only two daughters; one, the Lady Margaret, married Sir Michael Newton, and the other, Lady Frances, married Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. Lady Margaret dying childless, Hampton Court came to her sister; whose daughter and co-heiress, Miss Williams, brought the estate of Hampton by marriage to Lord Maldon, afterwards Earl of Essex, whose son sold it. It was held by the Conyngsbyes for upwards of three centuries.

Conyngsby. She was a shining example of piety and virtue, and had so many other valuable qualities as made her a very great blessing to his Lordship, and very much admired and highly esteemed by all that knew her. To me who had the happyness, by God's Providence, of waiting on her as Chaplain she was all goodness and condescension. H. MINCE."

There was only one son of this second marriage, who died at Hampton when an infant, choked by a cherry stone, and is buried at Hope.

Lord Conyngsby's sun went down in darkness. Surviving the wife of his tenderest affections, who could best influence him for good; impaired by his numerous lawsuits in the fortune which he had himself improved; unsuccessful in his efforts to vindicate to the extent that he desired his manorial rights; without an heir to his hereditary honours; Earl Conyngsby too truly experienced in his declining years the bitterness of disappointed hopes, and the vanity of all human wishes. He died in 1729, at his seat near Leominster, and was buried in the Church of Hope-under-Dinmore; the nave of which he rebuilt, and where a handsome marble monument, surmounted with a full length statue of his Countess, of his son,* and of himself in the full court dress of the period, is erected to his memory. The monument is void of any inscription. May the Author be allowed to play the limner, and to sketch the character of one, whom Leominster for so many years delighted to honour, and whose memory is continued in the handsome gift of the costly silver maces still year by year carried before the civil officers of the Town. Earl Conyngsby, with all his faults, must have had many virtues. Born of an antient family, he elevated that family to the third rank in the peerage. Released in middle life from the yoke of an unequal and unpropitious marriage, he allied

* On this monument of Lord Conyngsby in Dinmore Church, the child was represented with a cherry in his mouth, and blood streaming down his cheek, in allusion to the manner of his death. Some one of later years has had these sad tokens of a parent's grief removed from the figure of the infant.

himself with a daughter of the noblest in the land. Contending against the disadvantages of a neglected education, although he never overcame the evil effects of a want of early discipline and self-control, he was enabled to attain to a certain political celebrity, and to take part with credit to himself in the public affairs of the State. Called on various occasions to fill high offices, and installed in posts of trust and importance, he never evoked in those days of notorious peculation a word of censure, nor a whisper of mal-administration. The personal friend of one Sovereign, as far as his phlegmatic nature would allow, and the devoted servant of another, he must have possessed, amidst all his errors, some princely qualities, with which to attract attention and to conciliate esteem. Upright, courageous, high-principled, though vain, impulsive, and impatient of control, Lord Conyngsby's greatest enemy was himself; and now, in the face of his sentiments of patriotism, of his faithful allegiance, of his undeniably good intentions, and of his many acknowledged merits, his name is best remembered for his faults. So true is it that

> The evil that men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones.

In 1690, a large fire broke out in Etnam Street. These items in the Chamberlain's accounts attest the fact, and speak well for the sympathy and kindly feelings of the Bailiff and Burgesses.

	£	s.	d.
1690-91.—P^{d} to those who were appointed to watch when the ffire was in Eatenam Streete ..	1	0	0
P^{d} to the Widow Bach for candles and other things delivered by her to those who watcht the ffire ..		2	6
P^{d} to the Widow Caswall towards the reparation of her house, and to supply her necessity, and to pay her house rent	6	0	0
P^{d} to Mary Caswall to supply her necessity ..		10	0
P^{d} to William Jeenes upon the like occasion ..	1	0	0

In 1699, on Monday, March 18th, a still more terrible conflagration alarmed the Inhabitants, in which their antient

and beautiful Parish Church was totally destroyed. The following contemporary account is given of the origin of this disaster.

"The Church was covered with lead, laid upon a boarded roof. Between the board and the lead a quantity of peas-haulme was laid, to bed the lead more evenly. The roof being out of repair, Mr. Tompkins, a plumber, was employed to repair the same. He and his men had been the morning part engaged, and had rolled up the lead, for the purpose of soldering the defected sheet. They had an iron pot with charcoal for heating their irons. They had left the Church to take their dinner, and the day being very blusterous, some sparks were blown into the peas-haulme, and set the whole on fire, which, melting the lead, rendered all assistance useless."

Queen Anne ascended the throne on March 8, 1701. She was the last Sovereign who gave a Charter to the Borough. Her Charter confirms the first Grant of Charles II. in 1665, and entirely omits all reference to his second Charter of 1685. These items in connection with this last Charter occur in the Chamberlain's accounts for 1705-6.

	£	s.	d.
P[d] for my expenses in staying in London 4 or 5 days to bring down the Charter	1	10	0
Expenses down		13	6

As William III. had raised to distinction the families of Colt and Conyngsby, so did Queen Anne bestow her royal favour on the celebrated line of the Harleys. One of this family, Mr. Auditor Harley, the second son of Sir Edward Harley, and next brother of Robert, first Earl of Oxford, was the representative for Leominster in many successive Parliaments. He took an active part in the transactions which preceded and accompanied the landing of William III. in England. On one particular occasion, he rendered the King a signal service, of which he gives this rather wordy account in his own handwriting.

"Apprehending myself discovered in buying arms, I got out of London and overtook Col. Birch at Wickham, from whence we

went to Wallingford out of all roads, which was the only bridge standing between Oxford and London: from thence we went to Salisbury, keeping no road, and by a signal Providence escaped being taken by a party of King James's horse. We met the Prince at Salisbury where he was come that night. Having upon the road mentioned to Col. Birch the securing the passage over the Thames at Wallingford Bridge, he took the hint and proposed the same to the Prince, and that, in order to secure it, 500 dragoons should be thrown into Wallingford, and that at the same time the garrisons in Reading, consisting of Irish foot should be alarmed by a Regiment of Horse, but the Prince told him that the route of the army was settled to march to Oxford, to which Birch replied, "That, Sir, is not the way to London, and if you give the King's army time to recover their present consternation, it will not be possible for your troops to stand before the King's army, who will certainly fight if once blood be drawn upon them by foreigners." The Colonel pressing this matter with much earnestness, the Prince directed him to attend Duke Schomberg, who, being convinced by Birch's reasons, advised the altering the route of the army; and Reading being faced by a regiment of Dutch Horse, and Eppinger's Dragoons taking post at Wallingford, after a slight skirmish the Irish abandoned Reading where a few men were killed. I mention this so particularly because there is no person now living besides myself that knows or has taken notice of this circumstance. From Salisbury I went directly into Herefordshire, and met my father at Stoke; he and my brother having raised a troop of horse at their own charge. With them I went the next day to Worcester, where we joined Mr. Foley and Mr. Bromley and other gentlemen, of which place by the consent of the gentlemen, Sir E. Harley was made governor, during which time some parties having brought in the plunder of horses and other things, he ordered all that could be seized to be restored, except a blasphemous image of the Holy Trinity, (it was first shown to the Bishop,) which he ordered to be broken in pieces in the open street. (All the books of the Excise and

Hearth-money were seized and sealed up without receiving any money.)

"Here we had the alarm of the Irish, which by three expresses came within the compass of our Town; one from Shrewsbury, one from Gloucester, and a third from Ludlow, all bringing the same representation of their near approach to them from such distant places. But by his great care and prudence that very populous city was kept in absolute quiet, which, perhaps, was the only one throughout the Kingdom that did not feel the shocks of this consternation."*

Mr. Harley supported the Government of William III. throughout the whole period of his reign. Shortly after the accession of Queen Anne, he obtained by the influence of his brother, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the honourable and lucrative office of Auditor of the Imprest,† which he held during life. When, at the commencement of the reign of George I., the Earl of Oxford was impeached, and committed to the Tower, Mr. Auditor Harley stood forward in the lower House as his affectionate and spirited advocate, and met with an undaunted front,‡ and with persevering resistance, the taunts and threats of

* Historical Notes by Mr. Auditor Harley, from MSS. in the possession of the Lady Frances Harcourt.

† "Imprest" was the term applied in those days to a loan or advance of public money from the Exchequer. The Auditor of the Imprest was the Officer whose business it was to audit and to hold vouchers for these loans or fore-instalments of public monies.

‡ "My Lord Oxford being then in the country, neither his friends nor his enemies would believe that he would appear in London, and so confident were his enemies of this, that the Lord Conyngsby said in the House of Commons that 'the Lord who had been the first Minister in the Queen's reign has absconded himself, and would never appear to justify his administration;' to which I replied in the House that 'the person that Lord means is so far either from absconding or flying, that he came last night to his own house in London, where he is resolved to remain, being determined to justify his conduct, which if he would not do, he would think his blood too small a sacrifice to atone for anything he had done against the liberties of his country.'"—MSS. Notes of Mr. Auditor Harley, in the collection of Lady Frances Harcourt.

his embittered opponent, Lord Conyngsby; until at last that same malevolent party spirit, which aimed at the life of his celebrated brother, was turned against himself. Much public money passed through his hands in the discharge of his responsible office, and hence a charge was produced and pressed against him of having embezzled the funds of the State. Mr. Harley came out unscathed from the accusation; and proved that while in one year, 1717, thirty six millions of money were paid into his hands, yet his accounts were correct within 3s. 4d., which had been mischarged through the inadvertency of a clerk in the office. While this investigation was in progress, he retired into private life, and employed his time in literary* pursuits, and in the study of questions tending to social improvements, and to the advancement of the best interests of his tenantry. He represented this Borough in nine Parliaments, through a period of thirty years, and for the longer term of forty years was the Recorder of the Corporation.

On one particular occasion, when Lord Conyngsby endeavoured to wrest from the Corporation the privileges of its Charter, Mr. Harley, at much cost to himself, vindicated their rights, and secured the continued exercise of their franchises and liberties. In 1732, he resigned the office which he had held so long, and the duties of which he had discharged so well.

"Eywood, January 1, 1732-3.

"Gentlemen,—It is with real satisfaction that I send your Charters by my son, which were put into my hands, and which at my great expence were defended when a prosecution was begun for the subversion of the franchises and libertys of the Corporation. You may be assured that I shall on all occasions most readily express my real regard for the welfare of the Burrough of Leominster, for

* He wrote an "Essay for composing a Harmony between the Psalms and other parts of the Scripture, but especially the New Testament; printed at London, MDCCXXIV." Mr. E. Harley augmented several small benefices, and assisted in the maintenance of many Schools. From his known zeal to promote Christian knowledge, he was chosen, in 1725, Chairman of the Trustees for the Charity Schools in London.

which I had the honour of serving as Recorder and in Parliament so many years. I am, Gentlemen, your most humble servant,

E. HARLEY.

The Bailiff and Burgesses of Leominster."

Mr. Harley died at Eyewood in 1735, within three years of his resignation of the Recordership of Leominster. A monument, erected in the Churchyard at Titley, records his character in not higher terms of panegyric than that character deserves.*

* The Author has been favoured with these autograph and hitherto unpublished letters of a son of Mr. Auditor Harley, who was afterwards third Earl of Oxford. He cannot resist the permission granted to him of making them public; as they exhibit a most refreshing picture of hearty and healthy domestic affection.

"March 12, 1729-30.

"My dearest,—In looking over my papers yesterday, I was surprised to find the enclosed letter which I fully thought I had sent on Saturday, and I cannot recollect how it was neglected, and am vexed at it because I would not have willingly omitted writing any post, for I am sure you deserve all the thanks I can give you, and the fullest expressions of affection, who are so kind to me in writing so constantly, and though nothing can give me more pleasure in your absence than hearing from you, yet I hope this way of conversing will soon be succeeded by that which will be more agreeable to us both; and tho' I cannot yet say when the horses shall be sent to meet me, yet I desire they may be kept in readiness to come at a few hours' notice, for I do not intend to stay an hour longer here than I needs must. Yesterday in the Committee we voted to take off the duty on salt, and the stream ran so strong for it that having R[obert] W[alpole] and the Scotch with us, the minority were so few that tho' there was a division, yet the minority gave up the question without being told. This is the first time I have voted with R. W., or rather that he has voted with me. I hope we shall move for the Hereford Turnpike Bill to-day, and when I can see that through the Committee I hope to take my leave of them. The Duke and Duchess of Bedford are reconciled and come to live together this day, which is to be celebrated as a new wedding. I kept my letter open till I came from the House to know what would become of the Call, which is put off till to-morrow sennight, and I hope the House may be then called, that I may come down the week before or in Easter week. My humble duty to my father, and many kisses to the dear boys. Affectionate services to my sister. I am, my dearest, with the most entire affection, yours,

E. HARLEY."

"London, March 16, 1729-30.

"My dearest,—I date my letter as yesterday, because that day made me the happiest of men by giving me the best of women. When I look back upon

His son, Mr. Robert Harley, succeeded him both as Recorder and representative for Leominster: and his grandson, the Right Honourable Thomas (Lord Mayor) Harley, also held the Recordership of this Borough.

The accession of George I. to the throne was a subject of rejoicing to the Inhabitants of Leominster. The Chamberlain's accounts contain the accustomed charges, and show that the Bailiffs and Burgesses drank their wine at the Market Cross, made their proclamations, and lighted their bonfires with as much good will and animation for the house of Guelph, as they had done for the family of Stewart.

Leominster was at this time an active, bustling thriving place. Dr. Stukely, who visited it about 1720, has left this account of

the years we have spent together, they seem but as yesterday; they have past so pleasantly; and tho' they are gone, yet the pleasing reflection on the happiness and the comfort they yielded is still remaining, and gives me the most delightful prospect of those many years with which I hope it will please God to bless us. Time, which decays everything else, serves to invigorate and strengthen our love. I thought it impossible that I could love you more passionately than I did when I first took you, my dearest, to my arms; but every year has most happily convinced me of my mistake, and taught me that I can every day love you better than the former; and how can it be otherwise when the only contention between us is whose affection shall be greatest to the other. When I reflect upon the uncommon felicity I enjoy in you, my dearest, and in the dear children (those natural pledges of our love) with which it has pleased God to complete our happiness, as it fills my heart with joy, so it calls upon me to express the greatest thankfulness to God in the most humble manner, for bestowing so great a blessing upon so unworthy a creature as I am, and daily to implore the continuance of his goodness and loving-kindness to us, and that as He has hitherto blessed and preserved you so that He will still be your protection, and make you again a happy mother, and that we may bring up our dear children in the knowledge of piety and virtue. These are the thoughts with which I please myself, but my heart is too full to express itself by letter, and hope it may not be long before this manner of conversing will be interrupted by my returning home to you. I am sorry to find by your letter yesterday that any of mine have miscarried, for I have not omitted writing one post, (except when the letter was mislaid) which I hope you have received. My affectionate service to my sister. I am concerned that I am prevented writing to her. Many kisses to the dear boys. I am, my dearest, with the most entire and most faithfull affection, yours,

E. HARLEY."

it. "Leominster is a Town of brisk trade in manufactures of their admirable wool, in hat-making, leather, and many others. It lies in a valley luxuriant beyond measure. Three rivers of very swift current go through the Town; nor will the industrious Inhabitants suffer the Water Nymphs that preside over the streams to be idle, for with mills and machinery of various contrivance, they make them subservient to many uses in the way of their trades. There are some poor remains of the Priory, chiefly a little Chapel, which, I imagine, belonged to the Prior's family: underneath it runs a pretty rivulet, which used to grind his corn, now converted into a fulling mill: near are very large ponds for fish, to furnish the monks on fasting days.

The Mayor, who invited us to attend him thither, had a long black caduceus to walk withall, tipped with silver.* There was a fine gate house pulled down not long since near Ambury Close, denominated from the place Almsbury, in which they gave their scraps away to poor people at the gate, as I have observed at several other religions. This is recorded a great argument of their charity, whilst idle folks lost their time in waiting for it."

The reigns of Queen Anne and George I. were the most palmy days of the Corporation. The Bailiff and Burgesses were persons of no small importance. They were men conscious of the dignity and of the responsibilities of office. They were respected and patronized, if not courted by their neighbours. They were not entirely devoted to the cares of business, or the acquisition of gain, but found time for amusement in keeping hounds and hunting the Buck. These hounds were the property of the Corporation, kept by the Tenants, and brought together into a "Town Pack" as

* This "caduceus" is still carried by the Worshipful the Mayor on all public occasions. It is a plain ebony stick, four feet, three inches in length, and one inch in diameter, void of all ornament, only tipped with a band of silver, four inches and a half in breadth at its top. It has this inscription, engraven on the side; "Ex dono Edwardi Freeman, Recordat. Burgi Leominstre, Anno Dom., 1659." This account of Dr. Stukeley's would imply that the Mayor was accustomed during his year of office to carry this symbol of his civic honour whenever he went abroad.

it was called, when occasion required. It must have been a goodly sight to see the portly Burgess, or the capon-fed Justice of Leominster, mount his steed and join his colleagues, as they started early with their motley hounds to the hunting field!

The following items occur in the Books of the Corporation:—

"April 18, 1720. Ordered, That whatsoever Tenant shall hereafter come to agree with this Chamber for renewall of any lease shall be obliged to keep, or to cause to be kept, well and sufficiently, one hound for the use of the Bayliffe and Capital Burgesses of this Borough, and that the same be inserted in each lease."

"Saturday, 31st August, 1723. Ordered, That the thanks of this Chamber be returned by Mr. Bach (the Bailiff) to the Duke Chandos for his Buck, and by the Town Clerk to Sir Archer Croft for his Buck."

[These were sent alive for the purpose of being hunted.]

The Bailiffs and Burgesses of Leominster possessed at this time in an eminent degree the art, popularly attributed to all aspirants to Municipal honours, of thoroughly enjoying the luxuries of a well-spread table. They not only gave their Court or Monday dinners,* and thus kept up a series of friendly gatherings among themselves, but they were during the first quarter of this century the guests of the most influential of the neighbouring gentry. They received and accepted invitations to the Harleys; to both Mr. Speaker Harley at Eyewood, and to Mr. Auditor Harley at Kinsome; to Sir Archer Croft at Croft Castle; to Earl Meath at Eaton Hall; to Mr. Bateman at Shobdon; to Lord Conyngsby at Hampton Court. These items in the Chamberlain's accounts attest the recurrence of these entertainments.

* "Saturday, 21st November, 1724. Ordered, That if every Bayliff of this Borough from this time forward do not keep four Dinners for the Capital Burgesses instead of Monday Dinners, and over and above his other customary and usuall feasts and entertainments, he shall forfeit £10 payable on account of Monday dinners, viz., 50s. for every dinner in default; the 50s. to be paid immediately after every dinner kept."

		£	s.	d.
1703.	Paid at Mr. Speaker's	1	3	0
	Paid at Mr. Harley's at Kinsome	1	7	0
1706.	Gave at my Lord Conings byes	2	2	6
	Gave at Sir Herbert Croft's	1	10	0
1720.	Gave at Brompton to the Servants there ..	2	10	0
	Servants at Aywood by Capt. Caswell ..	2	0	0

October 22, 1721. Ordered, That ye Chamberlain doe pay to Capt. Caswell 52s., being moneys he disbursed by order of the gentlemen of the Chamber to ye servants of W. Bateman Esq., at Shobdon.

		£	s.	d.
1723.	Gave to Earl Meath's servants	1	11	6

Oct. 20, 1726. That the Chamberlain do pay to Capt. Caswell £1 12s. 0d., being monies he paid to the servants at Croft Castle upon an invitation to dinner to all this Chamber.

This Captain Caswell was the life and soul of the Corporation at this time. He was the Paymaster at all these entertainments, and promoted by his own example the hospitalities of the Corporation.

		£	s.	d.
1722.	Gave to Capt. Caswell's servants at a publick entertainment when the Chamber was at dinner	1	1	0

An incident occurred at this time which illustrates the good feeling of the members of the Corporation to each other. A Burgess was appointed to the office of Sheriff, and the Bailiff and his brother Burgesses paid him the compliment to clothe the two Serjeants in his own livery, and sent them to wait on him at the Assizes.

"Monday, February 7th, 1723. Ordered, That ye Chamberlain doe cloath the two Serjeants in the Sheriff's livery, being a member of this Chamber, at the charge of the Chamber, in order for their attendance of him at the Assizes."

The Livery must have been of the most gorgeous and striking character. It was composed of blue coats and red stockings. Its cost was ten guineas.

"By an order of Chamber, two Liveryes for the two Serjeants to attend the Sheriff at the Assizes. Delivered, MARK WARD.

"February 17, 1723.	£	s.	d.
10½ yds Blew Cloth at 8s. 4d.	4	4	0
15 yds Shalloon at 18d.	1	2	6
10 yds web fustian at 12d.		10	0
12 doz. Coat Buttens		10	0
9 doz. Brest Do		3	9
2 and a half Mohaire		2	1
Silke thred and tape		3	8
2 yds and a half of Buckram		3	4
1 yd Canvas, one eighth fine Do		1	8
4 yds Wading		2	0
2 Wash Leather Skins		2	0
4 yds and a half of ferrett		1	1½
8 yds of silver Lace		14	0
2 pr. Scarlet R. Hose		10	0
2 Swords and Belts		16	0
2 Hats and Lace	1	4	0
	10	10	1½

The Bailiff and Burgesses under a sense of their greater importance at this time redecorated their seat in the Parish Church. We are able to give the outlay on this occasion also.

"Work done in Leominster Church.	£	s.	d.
Ffor 63 lbs of curled hair to fill seats and quosings	3	3	0
Ffor tacks		3	11½
Ffor 5400 of brass nailes at 9d.	2	0	6
Ffor 5 yds of Lace at 2d.		8	8
Ffor workmanship	2	10	0
Ffor Bording and Drink	1	4	0
	9	10	1¼

The Corporation, however, at this time, although careful for their own comforts and importance, and remarkable above either their predecessors or their successors for their own personal hospitality, and for the numerous entertainments and Banquets

to which they were invited by their neighbours, studied to promote by every possible means the welfare and well-being of the Inhabitants. For this purpose they exerted themselves and established, in addition to their Royal Grammar School, a National School, called "The Charity School," for the education of the children of the less wealthy Inhabitants. They cleared out from the Forbury* the timber, refuse heaps, and lumber that lay in it, and made it into a paddock, and surrounded it with quick-wood, and planted in it some Dutch elms, one row of which extended in a straight line from the entrance of the Church, through the whole length of Church Street, up to the site of the old Forbury Gateway. They built a Guard House over the Iron Cross, erected lamps at different places in the Borough, and marked out various highways or public roads. They also endeavoured to secure their best interests in perfecting the navigation of the Lug. The Minute Books of the Corporation attest these various changes.

"Feb. 4th, 1719. That the Common Seal of this Borough be affixed to four several letters, and the same sent to the Duke of Chandos, the Lord Harley, Wm. Bateman, Esq., and the Lady Scudamore, to request their benevolent contributions towards erecting a Charity School in this Borough."

"July 29, 1720. That the Chamberlain do forthwith erect a building over the Engine House for a Charity School."

"Feb., 1723. That the Chamberlain do erect a Guard House over the Iron Cross."

"March 11, 1723. That a Common Seal be affixed to two several letters to the High Steward, the Duke of Chandos, and to Sir Archer Croft and Sir Geo. Caswell, to desire their interest in perfecting the navigation of the Lug."

"June 26, 1725. This day the Bailiff and Capital Burgesses gave consent that the Inhabitants might erect posts, dig trenches,

* For notices relative to the improvements in the Forbury at this period, see the word Forbury in the Index of this Book.

and everything else needful, and sett about and make a Horse Course in the Etnam Street and Eaton Broads, within the liberties of this Borough."

"Oct. 5, 1730. That the Chamberlain buy half a dozen lamps as soon as possible, to be fixed up in such places about the Town as afterwards shall be agreed upon."

The same spirit which led to these improvements in the Town extended also to the Church. At this date the Daily Service was kept up by the wish, and at the cost, of the Parishioners themselves;* the West Gallery was erected for the children attending the newly built Charity School; the Reredos was illuminated by a Mr. Locke at a considerable cost; the trees were planted from the South Porch to the entrance from Church St.; the common paling of the Schallenge† was replaced by a handsome iron gate; and a sum amounting to £200 for the augmentation of the Benefice‡ was obtained from the Parishioners, which was doubled by a like sum from the revenues of the Bounty Board established by Queen Anne.

The Schallenge at Leominster Churchyard.

* "It is agreed that the Parishioners do pay to John Hughes, Curate, the sum of ten pounds yearly for reading prayers every day, and that the same be paid quarterly from Lady Day aforesaid by the Churchwardens of this Borough until further order."

† "Scallaga, sc., a lich-gate, as used in the West of England. Scallenge-gate, sc., the lich-gate, as still used in Hampshire."—Wright's Dictionary of obsolete and provincial words, in Bohn's Philological Library.

The principal entrance from the Town into the Churchyard, at Ludlow, is called the "Callands," which finds its origin in a corruption of the word "Schallenge," as a Schallenge or Lich-gate stood also at the entrance to the Ludlow Churchyard.

‡ At a Vestry held April 4, 1734, it was agreed that the amount given in be accepted from the Vicar in full discharge of money subscribed and received by him on account of the augmentation of the Vicarage.

Thus the first quarter of this century, embracing the reigns of Queen Anne and King George I., the period in which the Corporation of Leominster was most remarkable for its home hospitalities, and for the respect in which it was held by its influential neighbours, was also the æra of considerable progress, and of many improvements within the Town. At this time were originated those very arrangements which still for the most part prevail among ourselves.

From the death of George I., 1727, no event of very great local or political interest occurs in connection with the Town and Borough of Leominster; and it will be sufficient during the remaining space of 130 years to give brief extracts from either the Chamberlain's Accounts, the Minute Books of the Corporation or of the Churchwardens; and thus, by a short record of facts, to illustrate the annals of the Town.

"30th of August, 1729. That for the future the 29th of May and 11th of June (Accession) be observed publick days by this Chamber, and no other days; and that the Chamberlain, who on either of these days shall order above twelve bottles of wine to be drank publicly, shall not be allowed in his account more than the value of twelve bottles of wine, for that or any other liquor to be drank on such occasions."

"August 31, 1734. That an assize be delivered weekly to the Bakers on every Monday for regulating the weight of bread within this Borough."

"In 1735. That the Priory and Green be rented from Countess Conyngsby by the Corporation, at the rent of six guineas a year."

The neighbourhood of Leominster, as well as the whole County of Hereford, was at this time in a very disturbed state. The Hereford Turnpike Bill, to forward which Mr. Harley remained in Town,* was received with the utmost dissatisfaction, and gave rise to very serious riots and disorders, which were visited on the rioters in the severest penalties of the law.

* See preceding page 176.

"Notwithstanding the prosecution of so many persons in Herefordshire, and the execution of two men, for pulling down the Turnpikes near Ledbury, yet so obstinately bent are the common people of that country against Turnpikes, that on the 24th of April last they assembled together, and in a most riotous manner pulled down another Turnpike in the same County, near Leominster, called 'Poppings.'"*

1736. Paid for building the Washing Stocks £17 8s. 0d.

[These Stocks stood in Vicarage Street, close to the Pinsley. The large stones which served as Washing Blocks for beating the linen on still remain. The house was a red-tiled pent house open at the sides.

Aug. 12, 1757. P^d^ Francis Kinnersley for tile for the Washing Building in Vicarage Street .. .. 4s. 6d.]

"Monday, May 29th, 1738. That John Sayer be appointed Gamekeeper to the Bailiff and Capital Burgesses of the said Borough of their Royalties; and that a deputation be prepared for that purpose to pass under the Common Seal of the Borough."

"August 21, 1738. That the Bailiff appoint a proper place for a Hop market to be used every Friday."

"Sept. 4, 1738. That a subscription be sett on foot forthwith to promote and perfect the navigation of the Lug."

"August 16th, 1741. That the Serjeants at Mace be not sworn Attornies of this Borough Court."

"Oct. 15, 1741. That John Vale do not suffer any person to hang cloaths in this Chamber to dry, or do any work therein, other than by the order or for the use of this Chamber."

"Nov. 21, 1741. That £100 of Bishop Scory's† Charity, intended and given by him for the better employment of the poor of the Borough, be lent by the Chamberlain, as soon as

* The Popland's gate, at the end of Mill Street. See Political State of Great Britain, for June, 1736, p. 583.

† Bishop Scory was Bishop of Hereford, A.D. 1560. He left several benefactions to Hereford, and £100 to be lent without interest to four young tradesmen of Leominster. It is to be feared that this loan was the occasion of the loss of this benefaction to the Town.

such money shall come into his hands, to the Town of Leominster for seven years without interest, in order to keep the poor of the Town at work in a workhouse to be provided for that purpose, and that the Bailiff shall take security for the repayment thereof."

"Tuesday, June 1, 1742. That the Chamberlain do forthwith repair the Priory House, and make the same with proper additions, usefull and convenient for the Bailiff for the time being to make and keep his feasts and entertainments there, if he shall think fit."

"Dec. 11, 1742. That the Chamberlain write for a London Gazette, to be constantly sent to this Town, and directed to the Bailiff for the time being, and that the expence thereof be paid by the Chamberlain for the time being."

"Oct. 18, 1744. That the Beadle take notice of what pigs are suffered to go about the streets of this Borough, and who are the owners thereof, and deliver in the names of such owners to the Town Clerk in order to their being prosecuted at law."

"9th October, 1746. By cash expended at the Oak, &c., it being a public thanksgiving for the victory at Culloden £4 0s. 1d."

"That the Chamberlain pay 14s. to the several Inspectors appointed to attend at the several Toll-gates to prevent distempered cattle being brought into the Lent Fair."

"Feb. 10, 1746. Pursuant to a Petition this day delivered in Chamber, and subscribed by many of the Inhabitants of this Borough, requesting a subscription of a sum of money towards perfecting a navigation of the River Lugge, it is therefore agreed and ordered that this Chamber as a body do subscribe the sum of fifty pounds to be paid by the Chamberlain when other subscriptions are had sufficient to perfect the said navigation. [£25 of this grant was paid in Sept. 1748.]

The navigation of the Wye and of the Lug* was the great

* The River Lug is one of the few rivers in England frequented by the grayling. This fish is said to have been introduced into its streams by the Benedictine Monks of the Priory from the Low Countries of Switzerland. This fish comes in as the trout goes out. The fishing for it commences in

local question of the County of Hereford during the latter part of the preceding, and during the whole of the eighteenth century. It afforded discussion for the scientifick, speculation for the adventurous, investment for the wealthy, and interest for all. Four different Acts of Parliament were passed in connection with this object. The first, in the 26th year of Charles II., A.D. 1674, an Act entitled "For the making navigable the Rivers Wye and Lug, and the rivers and brooks running into the same, in the Counties of Hereford, Gloucester, and Monmouth." The second, an Act passed in the 7th and 8th of William III., 1695, entitled, "An Act for making navigable the Rivers Wye and Lug in the County of Hereford." The third, in the 13th year of George I., 1727, entitled "An Act for explaining and amending an Act passed in 7 and 8 of his late Majesty, William III.;" and the fourth, passed Sept., 1809, the 49th of George III., entitled "An Act for amending several Acts for making navigable the Rivers Wye and Lug, and for making a horse towing-path on certain parts of the banks of the said rivers."

August, though the month of October is the special grayling month. Several attempts have been made of late years to import the grayling into distant streams. Mr. Higford Burr has introduced them into the Thames near Reading, where they are reported of as doing well. While the trout is a solitary, the grayling is a gregarious fish, and moves along in shoals. Its spawn is very prolific, and it multiplies considerably faster than the trout. The grayling affords pleasant sport to the skilful fly-fisher, and is also very readily taken by angling with various ground-bait, the most deadly of which are the grasshopper, the worm, and gentle; but the fly-fisher looks upon these means as unsportsmanlike, and the proprietors of the waters have in many instances forbidden their use. There are four Angling Clubs in the neighbourhood of Leominster: the Kingsland, where the grayling are frequently taken of a large size; the Leominster Club, which extends over twenty-seven miles of water on the Lug and Arrow: the Bodenham, at Dinmore; and the Leintwardine Club, on the Teme. Here the late Sir Humphrey Davey enjoyed the sport of fly-fishing, and compiled his beautiful work, "Salmonia." All these waters are well-stocked with trout and grayling, and strictly preserved and staked. There are also private fisheries attached to the domains of Shobdon Court, (Aymestry,) Croft Castle, and Hampton Court. One of the rules of the Leominster Angling Club is "that no trout be taken between the 1st of October and the 12th of February, and no grayling of more weight than half a pound between the 14th of February and the 1st of May."

The same object was promoted throughout this period by the exertions of individuals, and by the subscriptions and contributions of public bodies. Lord Conyngsby, whose seat at Hampton Court was located on the Lug, took an active part in promoting its navigation. The following letter was addressed to him on the subject of the second of these Acts of Parliament by a Magistrate of this County :—

"My most honoured L^{d} Coningsby,—I don't doubt but that you are dayly endeavouring to gett ye Commissioners ffor Wye and Lug settled by my L^{d} Keeper. I need not press you with reasons for a dispatch of it; you know y^{m} much better than I: but I must mention some. The 29th of June w^{ch} is ye time ffor ye 1st payment, and for ye settlement of w^{ch} will be y^{r} greatest difficulty of all, draws on apace, and till those Commissioners y^{t} are to be appointed by my L^{d} Keeper are settled, the other Commissioners for levying ye tax cannot act at all, being to receive their directions ffrom those Commissioners. I hope you will be very cautious w^{ch} persons you name to my L^{d} Keeper ffor Commissioners in each County, since on them will depend ye whole success of the navigation, ffor their powers are large enough either to effect or defeat ye navigation at their own pleasure. I know no reason why the Trustees may not be nominated, since you will find without them a great scarcity of such other persons as are well quallify'd and you may safely confide in: ffor I reckon our whole success of effecting ye navigation depends upon this choyce of Commissioners, w^{ch} I hope you will have great regard to. I doe not know any just exception to be made against ye naming ye Trustees. If there are any, I shall readily acquiesce in your choyce of others. However I desire y^{r} L^{d}ship will be carefull to name a sufficient number of such as you are sure will be your ffriends, and they will be friends to y^{e} navigation, I am sure. I pray of you also, my L^{d}, to exert y^{r}self to procure y^{r} Commission that others may not assume it solely to themselves. This day Mr. Herring and Mr. Broom are gone in custody of a messenger ffor London,

and the Deputy Lieftenants are mett in order to deliver over ye confined Catholicks and disaffected persons to ye High Sheriff, pursuant to ye directions of our L^{d} Lieftenant, w^{h} will be done in ye morning. It will make a great clamour and cry amongst y^{m}, but we are not concern'd at that, since we are but doeing our duty. They complain'd of their easy confinement. This they will exclaim against much more, but we are not to care for that. I pray, my Lord, think w^{t} will become of us after ye 4th of May, old money remaining on our hands useless, and no new to trade with. Something must be done before you rise. I beg your pardon for this trouble, and remain, my L^{d}, your most humble servnt,

April 13th, '96. JAMES MORGAN."

This Act, passed in the 7th and 8th of William III., laid a tax of £5000 a year on the County of Hereford for the promotion of this object. The schemes, however, proved ineffective, and the monies were levied in vain. The same plans were sought to be carried out at several subsequent periods by private and public subscriptions. In all these attempts, as on this occasion, the Bailiff and Burgesses of Leominster ever showed themselves willing to take part. There are yet traces of locks and gates having been erected at various places between Leominster and Mordiford. The bells of the Parish Church of Leominster, A.D. 1750, were conveyed, on the occasion of their being recast, to and from Chepstow by the waters of the Lug and of the Wye, though with various mishaps, and in the face of many difficulties. The navigation of the Lug was never successfully accomplished.

In 1748, the first Moravian Congregation was formed at Leominster, under the auspices of the Rev. John Cerinick.*

"Monday, April 16, 1750. That a Proclamation be made that no person shall weigh any wool at any of the Fairs for this

* Bishop John de Watteville, in September, 1759, organized this congregation. A plot of ground in South Street, was purchased, and presented by Mr. Plevy, of Westhope, on which a Chapel was built, and opened by Bishop Gambold, in January, 1761. In the rear of the Chapel is the Burial Ground. A Residence for the Minister adjoins the Chapel.

Borough, but at the Wool Hall; and that no wool be exposed to sale at any of the said Fairs at any place but in the Forbury."

"June 28, 1751. That an invitation be given to the Lord Bishop of Hereford to dine with this Chamber when he comes here to confirm, and that the expense thereof be paid by the Chamberlain."*

"Monday, Dec. 26, 1752. That the picture of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, now made a present of to this Corporation, be put up in the Council Chamber."

"April, 1753. That the Bailiff employ workmen to pull down the old Gaol, and to carry and agree for materials for building a new gaol in New Street: and that the wall be taken down next the School House; and such a tower be made there as shall be thought proper."

[This order was given in consequence of the falling in of the old Forbury gateway in the year 1752. This gateway, on entering it from the Town, had the old Gaol on its right hand, and the School House on its left. Its fall involved the removal of the Gaol to its present position in New Street, and the taking down of the wall next to the late Charity School, the site of which is now occupied by the Shrubbery, planted on the ground lately purchased of the Corporation by Mr. Sale. The erection of a tower, as contemplated by this order, has never been effected.]

"Monday, Sept. 30, 1754. This day Mr. Fallows, Mr. Ward, and several other persons applied to this Chamber for the use of the Priory House to keep an assembly in. Ordered, That leave

* The following specimen of one of these Entertainments is enclosed among the Vouchers of the year 1724:—

To Treat the Bishop	£	s.	d.
A Bacon Ham, wt twelve pounds	0	6	0
A Rib of Bief	0	4	4
Six Chickens	0	2	2
Bread, Butter, and Cheese, and Dressing	0	4	6
Nine Bottles of Wine	0	18	0
Ale, Sydr, and Tobacco	0	7	6
Sweetmeats	0	1	6
	£2	4	0

be given accordingly: they returning the key of the said House to the Bailiff on the morrow after each assembly night. At the same time it was agreed to by them to make use equally of Seward and Mr. Wallace to serve the liquor for such assembly night, and no other person."

"That Ward the Player have leave to make use of the School-house to act in: he depositing in the hands of the Bailiff five guineas for the use of the poor, and five guineas more to put the said School-house in repair, after the said Ward hath quitted the same, if he shall refuse or neglect to do it himself.*

"Monday, October 6, 1755. That the Chamberlain cause the Bell upon the Cross Market to be taken down to be new cast, and made larger. That the Chamberlain cause the School-house to be repaired and ornamented."

[This Bell was cast by Mr. Evans of Chepstow, who recast the bells of the Parish hurch .

P^d Mr. Evans for additional metal and casting the bell now on the Cross .. .. £7 1s. 5d.]

"Saturday, May 14. That the forty bushels of wheat now bought by the Bailiff be sold out to the poor of the Borough in small quantities at six shillings a bushel, and that the deficiency of the money it cost be paid by the Chamberlain."

"Saturday, May 1st, 1756. Hester, the wife of Richard Town, late of the Parish of Stretford, in the County of Hereford, Yeoman, being indicted at this Sessions, tryed and convicted of petty larceny in stealing one loin of mutton, the property of John Coates of the Borough aforesaid, butcher. Ordered, That she be taken to the Gaol of this Borough, and from thence at

* Mr. Ward was the Grandfather of the late Mrs. Siddons, and of Messrs. John and Charles Kemble, the celebrated Tragedians. His Tomb is to be seen in the Churchyard. This inscription is engraved on it:—

"Here, waiting for our Saviour's great Assize,
And hoping through His merits hence to rise
In glorious mode, in this dark closet lies,

JOHN WARD, Gent., who died October 30th, 1773, aged 69. Also, SARAH, his Wife, who died January 30th, 1786, aged 75 years.

three o'clock this afternoon she be taken to the publick whipping post of the same Borough, and there whipt by the Gaoler."

"Saturday, Sept. 14, 1757. That the tolls of this Market, usually let or held by the Bailiff of this Borough, be at Michaelmas next let by the Bailiff and Capitall Burgesses, and the rent thereof paid into the hands of the Chamberlain; and that notice thereof be given to the Inhabitants of the said Borough that the said tolls are now to be let to the highest bidder."

"Tuesday, Sept. 24th, 1757. That the next Bailiff be allowed by the Chamber £60 for the year he serves as Bailiff in lieu of the tolls of the Market, for treating the Judges and for the rent of the Priory; and that the said £60 be paid by the Chamberlain quarterly."

[The tolls were let to John Waring, a shoemaker, for £110.]

"Monday, Oct. 1st, 1759. That for the future the Bailiff give the Corporation a dinner upon the first Saturday after the 24th of August, it being Nomination Day, and for which he shall be allowed three pounds."

"Thursday, Dec. 3, 1761. That the Common Seal of this Borough be affixed to the address to his present Majesty, and that it be presented to him by the High Steward, Recorder, and the Members of Parliament for the said Borough."

[This address was drawn up and engrossed under the care of the Vicar.

P^d^ the Rev. Mr. Vaughan for the address to the King £2 2s.]

"Nov. 30, 1763. That Council's opinion be taken on Mr. Clarke's deed and will, relating to the hospital in the West Street; and that the case be drawn by Mr. Fellowes and Mr. Coleman, and be laid before the Attorney General."

"Jan. 19, 1763. That Mr. Williams, Master of the Grammar School, have the use of the Charity School for washing his boys in for the future."

"Tuesday, Nov. 25th, 1766. That instructions be given to our Members to use their utmost endeavours to prevent the distilling of barley, or any other kind of grain whatsoever: and

that they use their utmost endeavours to lower the prices of all sorts of grain and provisions whatsoever for the sake of the poor of this Kingdom."

"That the Crier make proclamation on every Thursday for all persons in this Town before Saturday night following to remove their muck, rubbish, and other nuisances from their doors in this Borough; and in default thereof that the offenders be prosecuted at Sessions at the expence of the Corporation or Chamber."

"Monday, October 5, 1767. That the Chamberlain pay the Rev. Mr. Williams five guineas for translating the first Charter granted to this Borough, and that he go on to translate the rest."

"Monday, Oct. 5, 1772. That the Bailiff be allowed £50 a year to be paid quarterly in lieu of tolls."

"That the Chamberlain for the time being be allowed £4 annually for his trouble in lieu of the rent of the Paddock."

"Sept. 11, 1772. That Edward Davies and Richard Wood be prosecuted for exercising the trade or business of Taylor within the said Borough, not being made free of the Company or Society of Taylors within the said Borough."

"That the Chamberlain provide 18 Prayer Books for the Aldermen's seats in Church."

"Monday, Dec. 26th, 1774. That all Proclamations by the Cryer of this Corporation be made at or near the respective doors of each Capitall Burgess of this Borough."

"Tuesday, May 20, 1776. That the Bailiff be paid £30 a year, instead of £50: and the Bailiff to have two dinners in each year."

"May 26, 1784. That the Bailiff and Justices appear at every public sessions of the Peace to be held for this Borough in their gowns, attended by the Serjeant at Mace and Constables."

"May 21, 1788. That the Chamberlain pay the Surveyor of the highways ten guineas towards the flagging and paving the way leading to the Church from the house in the occupation of Mr. Wyke in Church Street."

"Jan. 11, 1789. That the thanks of this Corporation be given to the Rt. Honble William Pitt, Chancellor of his Majesty's Exchequer, for his constant and uniform attention to the interests of the Kingdom in general, particularly for his spirited and manly defence of the constitutional rights of the two houses of Parliament, in providing for the temporary deficiency of the executive branch of Government. Also to ye Right Honble Thomas Harley,* our worthy Recorder, to John Hunter and Penn Ashton Curzon, Esqs., our representatives in Parliament, and to the 164 members of the House of Commons, who supported the Minister by their votes on the 16th day of December last."

Mr. Pitt proposed the appointment of a Committee for the consideration of the state of the Nation during the indisposition of the King. To this an amendment was made that the Chairman do report progress. A division took place, when 204 voted for the amendment, and 268 supported Mr. Pitt. These 264 Members, with Messrs. Pitt, Curzon, Harley, and Hunter making up the number 268, are the objects of this vote of thanks

* The Right Honourable Thomas Harley was the Grandson of Auditor Harley, and Son of Edward, the third Earl of Oxford. He was engaged in commerce, and achieved very considerable distinction as a Government Contractor. He was an opponent of Mr. Wilkes, and in 1763, when his offensive Publication, (No. 45 of the "North Briton,") was condemned to be publicly burnt as a libel, Mr. Harley, then Sheriff of London, effectually executed the sentence, in spite of the repeated and daring acts of the populace. On this occasion a heavy stick was thrown into his coach, by which his face was badly cut. This stick is now in the possession of the Honble and Rev. Henry Rodney. In 1768, when serving the office of Lord Mayor of London, the mob attacked the Mansion House; Mr. Harley, undismayed at their violence, rushed out, and seized a Ring-leader, and by his bold conduct dispersed the mob. He was elected, in 1761, Member for London, and subsequently Member for this County. He was Lord Lieutenant for Radnorshire, and Colonel of the first regiment of the Militia for the City. He became, on the death of Alderman Alsop, the Father of the City. In 1794, he fitted out, at his own charge, a Regiment of Volunteers in the County of Hereford, and took the command himself. He married, in 1753, Ann, the daughter of Edward Bangham, Esq., and had a large family of daughters, the second of whom married George, the second Lord Rodney.

of the Corporation. The vote of thanks was conveyed to Mr. Pitt by Mr. Curzon, who received this reply :

" Downing Street, Thursday, March 15, 1789.

" Sir,—I am extremely sorry that the attendance which I have been obliged to give at the Committee of the House of Commons, and otherwise unavoidable business has prevented my sooner begging of you the favour to convey to your Constituents at Leominster, how much I feel myself flattered by the expression of their approbation, which I had the honour of receiving through your hands. It gives me great satisfaction to find that the principles on which I felt it to be my duty to act coincided with their sentiments; and I beg to return my warmest acknowledgements for this mark of their good opinion, which I shall be at all times anxious to merit.

" I am, Sir, your most obedient and faithful Servant,

P. A. Curzon Esq. W. PITT."

At a Chamber Meeting held on the 10th of August, 1790, it is recorded that " William Toldervy, Esq., late member of this Corporation, bequeathed by his Will to the Corporation, the sum of £100, to be lent to four young tradesmen in the sums of £25 each, without interest."

[This benefaction has been since lost.]

" Feb. 9th, 1791. That enquiry be made by the Sergeants at Mace after the iron tools for boring for coals formerly lent to the late Mr. Preece of Aymestry."

" March 29th, 1792. That the Town Clerk write about the boring tools to Lingen, or where they may appear to be."

" June 6, 1794. That the sum of £25 be subscribed by the Corporation of Leominster for the internal defence of the County, and of the Kingdom in general."

" Ordered, by a unanimous vote of the Corporation that the sum of £100 be subscribed as a voluntary contribution in aid of the sum voted by Government for the prosecution of the war, and that the Chamberlain remit the same to the Committee of Merchants, at the Mansion House, London, to be paid into the Bank of England."

The Chamberlain's Accounts for this year contain this item:

Nov. 6th, 1794. By cash to a labourer for cleansing the Corn Market after Bull-baiting .. .. 1s. 6d.

"Aug. 3, 1795. That the Chamberlain pay the Committee for distributing wheat at a reduced price, £30, to enable them to furnish the poor therewith."

In 1796, the canal was opened between Leominster and Stourport, and Leominster and Kington. It was a work of considerable engineering difficulties. The cost of the work between Leominster and Kington was £37,000, and between Leominster and Stourport £80,000.

The Corporation took an active interest at this time in all the exciting events and political movements of the day. They not only voted their money as public occasion required, but they encouraged the display of national rejoicings.

	£	s.	d.
October 6. Paid the Ringers for ringing on Lord Nelson's victory	1	1	0
Oct. 16. Paid Mr. Brayen for Candles at the Illumination		5	8
Oct. 23. Ringers on Sir John Warren's Victory ..		10	6
„ John Stockton, for Bonfire made on celebration of D°.		5	8
Nov. 28. P^d. Mr. Nicholas for writing the Address to his Majesty	1	1	0
Nov. 29. Ringers, for ringing on the Thanksgiving day		10	6

"April 17, 1800. That the Chamberlain pay £5 5s. towards the Subscription for Inoculating the poor Children of this Borough."

"June 5, 1800. An address was prepared and read to congratulate his Majesty upon his escape from the late attempt on his Majesty's person, and the same was ordered to be engrossed and carried to the principal Inhabitants, and to be signed and presented to his Majesty by the Members of the Borough."

[This was the attempt made on the King's life by Luke

Hadfield, a lunatic, who fired a pistol at his Majesty in Drury Lane Theatre, on the evening of May 15th.]

"Feb. 24, 1803. It was agreed that Mr. James's plan be approved of, and that he erect a new Market House for the Corn Market, for the sum of £431, and to complete the same on or before 29th of September next."

"Dec. 2, 1805. In pursuance of a Meeting this day convened by the Bailiff to take into consideration the propriety of a public subscription for the relief of the wounded soldiers and sailors, and the widows of those who fell in the late glorious action off Trafalgar, (suggested to the Bailiff by the Secretary of the Patriotic Fund at Lloyd's Coffee House,) it was resolved that a public subscription be entered into for that purpose, and that the Corporation subscribe the sum of twenty guinea towards such relief."

"That the Chamberlain pay two guineas to Major Evans for the like sum expended upon the Volunteers in liquor upon the day of rejoicing for the above glorious victory."

[These Volunteers used the East side of the Churchyard as their Parade ground, and in wet weather were drilled in the north aisle of the Church.]

"Feb. 5, 1807. Then the sense of the Corporation was taken of the propriety of admitting Mr. Robert Hay, with his company of comedians to perform plays in the School-house or Court-house of the said Borough, and it was agreed that he should be admitted."

[At this time five Clergymen were Capital Burgesses; the Revs. John Wall, George Evans, James Colt, Francis Coleman, John Lodge.]

"Oct. 21, 1807. It was ordered that the value of hens to the Bailiff be fixed at 2s. 6d. per couple in each lease."

[Up to this date they were compounded for at 1s. 6d. per couple.]

"Oct. 21, 1807. That the Pig and Sheep Market be moved from Broad Street to New Street."

In 1808, on June 30th, the royal assent was given to "An Act for inclosing lands in the Borough of Leominster, in the County of Hereford, and in the Township of Luston in the Parish of Eye in the said County; and for paving and otherwise improving the streets and other public places within the Town of Leominster, in the said County."

"Dec. 26, 1808. That all timber trees belonging to the Corporation be numbered and marked; and those fit for felling be valued and felled."

At this date William Wall, Esq., a Capital Burgess, was High Sheriff of the County, and Edward Evans, Esq., of Eyton Hall, was Bailiff.

"April 1, 1811. On the application of William Wall, Esq., as a County Magistrate, (on behalf of himself and of the other Magistrates acting for the Hundred of Woolphy,) for permission to hold their private Sessions in the Council Chamber of the Borough; it was agreed that they should be so permitted during the pleasure of the Corporation."

On April 1st, 1816, William Cadwallader was executed for the murder of his wife at Leominster. He carried the dead body out, and placed it under a neighbour's garden hedge. It was a frosty night, and on lifting the body the ground was covered with frost, proving that it had only just been placed there. Cadwallader was 28 years of age, and possessed two houses and a shop of his own at Leominster. His grandfather, a native of Ludlow, suffered on the gallows for a similar offence, having murdered his wife, whom he followed into a cellar and there shot with a gun.

"September 30, 1816. That the Town Clerk give notice to the proprietors of the Manchester, Hereford, and Brecon wagons, that they must decline unloading their wagons in the Corn Market, unless they agree to pay the Corporation five guineas annually for the same."

On Saturday, May 25th, 1816, a meeting for establishing a Savings' Bank was held in the Town Hall; the Bailiff in the

Chair. The following gentlemen were appointed the Committee: The Bailiff, W. Wall, Esq., Rev. F. Coleman, Mr. F. J. Burlton, Mr. F. Allen, T. Coleman, Esq., John Morris, Esq., Mr. T. Morris, Edward Evans, Esq., Mr. Southall.*

Feb. 1, 1820. The Bailiff received official intelligence from Lord Sidmouth, one of the Secretaries of State, of the death of his Majesty, King George III., at Windsor, on Saturday evening, the 29th of January, at 35 minutes past 10 o'clock.

On Sunday, the 6th of February, the Corporation attended Divine Service in their robes with all the insignia of office covered with crape, in testimony of their respect for the late King.

On Tuesday, the 8th of February, the Bailiff and Corporation, attended by their officers, constables, &c., and also by the Vicar and Churchwardens, (with white wands,) proceeded to proclaim the King George IV. in the usual places by sound of trumpets, attended by a great concourse of people.

In the evening the Corporation met in the Council Chamber to drink the King's health, and the populace were regaled with two hogsheads of cider.

An address was presented to the new Sovereign, which concluded with these words:—"The rights and privileges enjoyed for centuries by the Inhabitants of this Borough, were graciously given to our ancestors for their steady attachment to the throne in a time of peculiar danger to the State; may we therefore be permitted to renew our inviolable attachment to your Majesty's sacred person and government."

April, 1828. Kenwater Bridge was built at an expense of £450, towards which Lord Hotham gave £100.

* At a Meeting on the 17th of June, 1816, Messrs. Coleman, Smith, and Morris were appointed Treasurers, and the following gentlemen named as Managers: Dr. Geary, Mr. Robert Evans, Mr. J. Tudor, Mr. James Woodhouse, Mr. Joseph Harris, Mr. J. Hayling, Mr. E. Woodhouse, Mr. Joseph Woodhouse, Mr. John Woodhouse, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Thos. Davis, Mr. W. Vale, Mr. Baker, Mr. Bart Davis, Mr. John Meredith, Mr. R. Burlton, Mr. J. Southall, jun., Mr. E. Southall, J. Pritchett, Mr. Caldewall, Mr. Hayling, Mr. Swift, Mr. W. Bedford, Mr. Tudor Davis, and Mr. T. Coates.

The Bank to be open once a fortnight, for one hour, to receive deposits.

"Dec. 6, 1828. That the salary to the organist cease from the 25th of March next."

[This salary had been £25 a year, paid by the Corporation.]

In May, 1829, the Pig and Sheep Market was removed from New Street to its present locality.

"This 29th day of June, 1830, the Bailiff received official intelligence of the death of his Majesty, King George IV., at Windsor Castle, which happened on Saturday morning, June 26, at a quarter past three o'clock.

On Friday, July 2nd, the Bailiff and Corporation, attended by their officers, constables, and also the Rev. Geo. Woodhouse, Vicar of the Borough and Parish Church of Leominster, together with the Overseers and Churchwardens, proceeded to proclaim William IV. in the usual places by sound of trumpet and a band of music, attended by a great concourse of people.

In the evening the Corporation met in the Council Chamber to drink the King's health in wine, and the populace were regaled with several hogsheads of cider."

A Meeting of the Bailiff, Capital Burgesses, and Inhabitants of this Borough, held in the Council Chamber on the third day of April last, it was unanimously resolved that the following address be presented to his Majesty:

"To his most gracious Majesty, King William IV.

"We, the Chief Steward, Recorder, Bailiff, Capital Burgesses, and Inhabitants of the ancient and loyal Borough of Leominster, most sincerely condole with your Majesty on the death of our late illustrious Sovereign, King George IV., under whose auspices victories were achieved, unexampled in conception, brilliant in execution, and glorious in effect; and by whose firmness and decision this Nation maintained its ascendancy in the most eventful period of our history.

"We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, humbly request to approach your Royal person, and to congratulate your Majesty on your accession to the throne of these realms, and cheered with the prospects of the past, we confidently look forward to the future in the fullest reliance on your Majesty's

Royal declaration to maintain the reformed Religion established by law, to protect the rights and liberties, and to promote the prosperity and happiness of all classes of your people,

Signed on behalf of the Meeting, THO. F. WATLING."

"October 4, 1830. That it is the opinion of this Meeting that the office for taking the assize of bread be no longer continued, and that the present officer have notice from the Town Clerk of its being discontinued."

"Sept 30, 1833. Minute. Two of the Commissioners, Messrs. Austin and Booth, appointed by his Majesty for inspecting the Accounts and Records of Municipal Corporations, attended at Leominster on the 9th day of September last past, and had access to the charters, Chamberlain accounts, the books and records relating to the Court of the Borough, and all other papers and documents they required for their inspection relating to the concerns of the Corporation, and they also examined the Town Clerk on oath as to the above particulars and all other matters they thought necessary to inquire after, and they appeared perfectly satisfied, and so expressed themselves before they left the Borough."

In 1836, a contract was entered into with Messrs. Stears and Co., of Stroud, for lighting the Town with gas, and the necessary works were erected at a cost of £2,987.*

In 1838, on May 9th, the royal assent was given to an Act "to amend an Act of the 48th year of the reign of his Majesty, King George III., relating to the improvements of the Town of Leominster in the County of Hereford."

On June 28th, in 1853, the Royal assent was given to an Act "For the establishment or improvement and regulation of Markets and Fairs in the Borough of Leominster, and for other purposes relating to the said Borough."

On Dec. 6th, 1853, the Railway was opened for through traffic between Shrewsbury and Hereford.

* A Company was formed for the purpose, the capital of which consisted of 400 shares of £10 each. Of these 120 were taken by the Contractor, and the remainder by the Inhabitants of the Town. The shares are in the hands of a few proprietors, and are not often in the market.

On Sept. 7th, 1854, the first stone of the new Market House was laid by H. James, Esq., then Mayor, with considerable formalities and extensive public rejoicings.

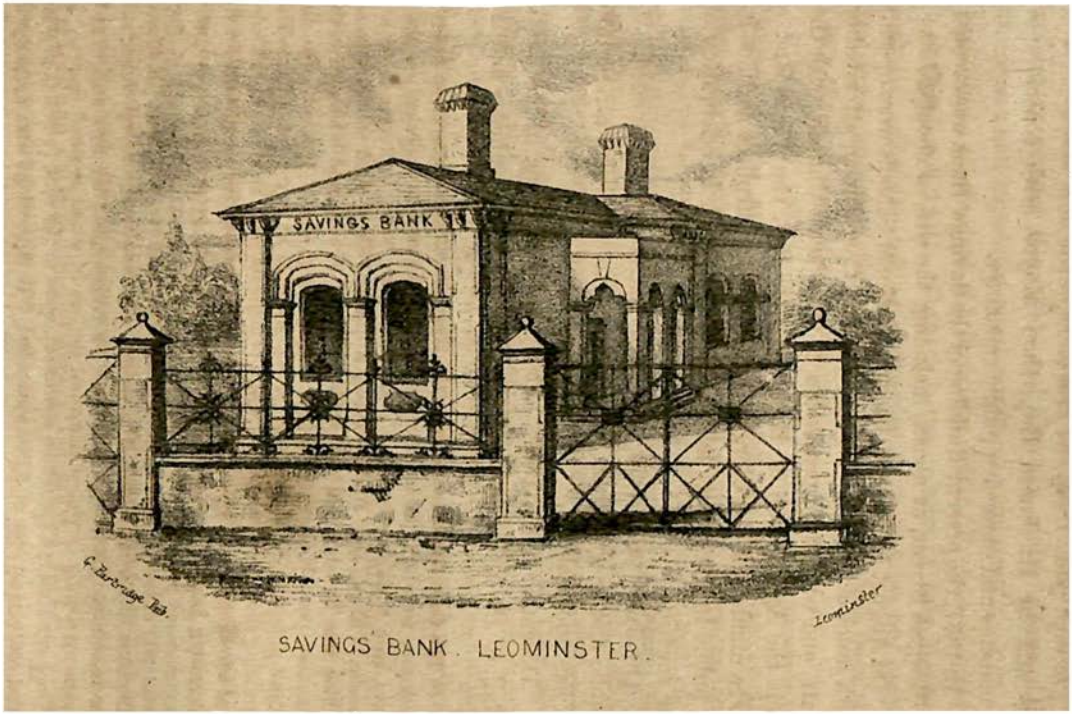
In 1857, the present Building of the Savings' Bank was erected in Burgess Street, at a cost, including the site, of about £750.

On August 10th, 1858, the new National Schools were opened with much ceremony. The Mayor and Corporation attended in state, and walked in procession to the Parish Church, with the Ven. the Archdeacon of Hereford, the Rev. the Vicar, and a large number of the Clergy, vested in their surplices and hoods. A public luncheon was laid in the Town Hall, in celebration of the occasion.

On June 9th, 1859, the Corn Exchange* was opened. A public dinner was given in honour of the successful completion of the undertaking.

December 20th, 1859. At a public meeting, in the Town Hall, of the Inhabitants of the Borough of Leominster and its

* The Corn Exchange occupies the West side of Corn Square: an antient enclosure in which, from time immemorial, farmers and dealers in grain have been wont to congregate. In this square were, in former days, the Stocks, Pillory, and Barley House, a quaint-looking shed or pent-house, which was in charge of the antient Bakers' Guild, and which gave the scantiest possible shelter from the inclemency of the weather. On the South side a Corn Market was erected in 1803 at a cost of £450. This Building stood on stone pillars with a pent-house roof, and open at the side; but affording no protection from the weather, and proving insufficient for the increasing trade, it was determined to erect the present larger and more commodious building. For this purpose a Company was formed in 1858, with 300 shares of £10 each, and a contract was entered into with Messrs. Cranston of Birmingham. The present Building is of a mixed character of architecture. Its front is of brick, ornamented with bath-stone copings, and some excellently carved enblematical devices of wheat ears and sheaves, &c. The large Hall is a handsome apartment, open to the roof, (which is of glass,) and contains an area of 2,800 square feet. It is provided with desks for the use of the various dealers in grain, and when arranged for public meetings will accommodate 500 persons. There is a smaller room, 26 feet by 19 feet, used as a Subscription Reading Room. The whole cost, with site and compensation to tenants, amounted to £4000, and the excess of the outlay over the capital of the Company was met by a loan. Mr. Russell, of Kingsland, is the Chairman of the Company.



SAVINGS BANK. LEOMINSTER.

neighbourhood, presided over by the Mayor, Henry James Esq., the following resolution was proposed by the Rt. Honble Lord Rodney, and seconded by the Vicar of Leominster, the Rev. Geo. Fyler Townsend:—"That it is expedient and desirable that a Rifle Corps be formed in this Borough and neighbourhood, which shall consist of enrolled members, being effectives, and of honorary members."

On June 4th, 1860, the Rifle Volunteers were sworn in before the Worshipful the Mayor, in the Town Hall, by the title of the "Sixth Herefordshire Company of Rifle Volunteers." The engraving at the side is the badge or breast ornament of the Corps, with the initials "L.V.R." (Leominster Volunteer Rifles,) forming a monogram in the centre. Shortly after their enrolment, the Right Honourable Lady Rodney presented the Corps with a silver bugle; and the butts were erected for rifle practice below Eaton Hill.

In 1860, a Cannon, captured at Sebastopol, was presented to the Corporation by the Government, and placed on a pedestal in the north east corner of the Grange.

On February 9th, 1861, a public dinner was given to Elias Chadwick, Esq., of Pudlestone Court, by the Mayor and Corporation, and other Inhabitants of the Town.

On October 15th, 1861, the new Churchyard was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Hereford. The ceremony was attended by the Mayor and Corporation, (preceded by their Mace-bearers), by a large number of the Clergy, vested in their surplices, and by a vast concourse of people. A similar event had not occurred in the Parish for upwards of six centuries.

On November 18th, 1861, a Government Savings' Bank was opened at the Post Office, Leominster.

The Borough of Leominster was never, in the whole course of its history, in a more flourishing condition than at the present time. Its trade, commerce, and population, have increased during the last ten years in a very remarkable

manner. The number of purchasers in its general markets have greatly augmented; and this larger attendance has raised the value of butter, eggs, cheese, vegetables, meat, and of all kinds of poultry, so that the usual result has followed from the introduction of the Railway—the equalization of the cost of all ordinary articles of daily consumption with the charges generally prevalent throughout the whole country.

The sale of grain has been especially influenced by the more ample facilities of communication. Dealers from Wolverhampton, Shrewsbury, Bewdley, Hereford, and even from more distant Towns, now frequent the market, and purchase of the farmers in the neighbourhood.

Leominster, with its rich pastures, fine soil, varied crops, and ample transit accommodation, bids fair to become a great mart and depôt for grain. The following are the returns for grain and flour despatched from the Leominster Station alone during three years. Other cargoes purchased in this market would be sent from Ford's Bridge, Eye, and Wooferton Stations.

	1856.	1857.	1858.	Total of Three Years
	Tons. Bush.	*Tons. Bush.*	*Tons. Bush.*	*Tons. Bush.*
Oats	48 or 2636	67 or 3360	57 or 3192	172 or 9188
Barley	270 ,, 8640	290 ,, 9280	266 ,, 8512	826 ,, 26432
Wheat	790 ,, 28440	852 ,, 30672	710 ,, 25560	2352 ,, 84672
Flour	487 ,, 19480	500 ,, 20000	477 ,, 19080	1464 ,, 58560
Total	1595 or 59196	1709 or 63312	1500 or 56443	4834 or 178852

The following table shows the correct tonnages of every description of traffic in and out of Leominster by rail for three years.

	Traffic received at Leominster Station.	Ditto forwarded.	L. and K. traffic passing through Leominster.	Total Tonnage.
1856...	22064 tons	596 tons	..	28040 tons
1857...	23951 ,,	9671 ,,	7680 tons	41302 ,,
1858...	16961 ,,	8013 ,,	25895 ,,	50869 ,,
Three Years Total	62976 tons	23660 tons	33575 tons	120211 tons

In addition to these general returns, 224 tons of Hops were sent off from the Station in 1858. The importation of oats for sale amounts to upwards of 15,000 tons annually.

The increase in the exportation of apples is considerable. Many of the smaller payments for apples are made by Post Office Orders: and while the orders issued at the Post Office are generally about £1,200 for the Quarter, in the three months of the Apple season they exceed £1,800. With a greater attention to the home-making of cider, and with an increased exportation of fruit, the apple tree will necessarily be more attended to, not only as the graceful ornament of this County, but as a source of more extensive profit and emolument.

Another criterion of the increasing prosperity of a Town may be looked for in the number of post letters received in it. There are many matters of trade and commerce, as well as of general business, which must of necessity be transacted by written communications. The returns from the Post Office at Leominster indicate an increasing ratio. The following is the return for the week ending the 21st of April in each of these years respectively.

	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.
Letters	5,963	8,220	8,511	9,167
Book or Parcel Post ..	556	921	919	958
Newspapers ..	1127	1167	1501	1230

Another test of the prosperity of a community is the amount of its smaller savings. In this respect Leominster is not deficient. The following is the statement of the depositors to its Savings' Bank during the last three years, and these will be probably increased, as the Post Office Savings' Bank was opened in November last.

Date.	No of Depositors.	Depositors of less than £1.	Depositors of less than £5.	Depositors of less than £10.
1858	1931	217	436	270
1859	1978	214	476	280
1860	2094	240	507	282

The Societies established to promote a spirit of self-reliance and independence flourish and abound. The Lord Hill's Lodge of Odd Fellows, the lately established Royal Hackluyt Court of Foresters, the elder institution of the Oak Benefit Society, the widely ramified and excellently conducted Herefordshire Friendly Society, all enrol many supporters from among the mechanics, tradesmen, and labourers of Leominster and its neighbourhood

The number of the members of these four different Societies cannot at the present time be less than 600. The Lord Hill's Lodge counts up about 300; the Oak Society about 40; the Royal Hackluyt Lodge about 60; and the Herefordshire Friendly Society about 200 enrolled members.

The actual population of the Town, as shown by the authoritative returns of the Census, attests a gradually progressive increase during the six decades of this century.

Period.		No. of Houses.	No. of Persons.		Total Population.
			Males.	Females	
1801	Borough and Parish	687	1349	1670	3019
1811	„	730	1468	1770	3238
1821	„	771	1673	1978	3651
1831	„	868	1996	2304	4300
1841	„	965	..	..	4916
1851	„	1181	2485	2729	5214
1861	„	1193	2702	2958	5660

The general appearance of the Town indicates prosperity and improvement. Public buildings are erected, as the Market or Town Hall, the Corn Exchange, and the National Schools. New houses are built, and quickly occupied: roads are made, pavements widened, shops enlarged and beautified. Trade is increased, markets better attended, traffic enlarged, exports and imports multiplied; and it only requires a more general and more generous public spirit, a greater power of cohesion, a more

willing disposition to unite in a spirit of mutual concession, and of mutual determination to promote all matters tending to the general welfare of the Town and the community, to enable Leominster to make still greater progress, and to assume that higher position which is within its reach by its central situation, its numerous facilities of inter-communication, and its many natural advantages.

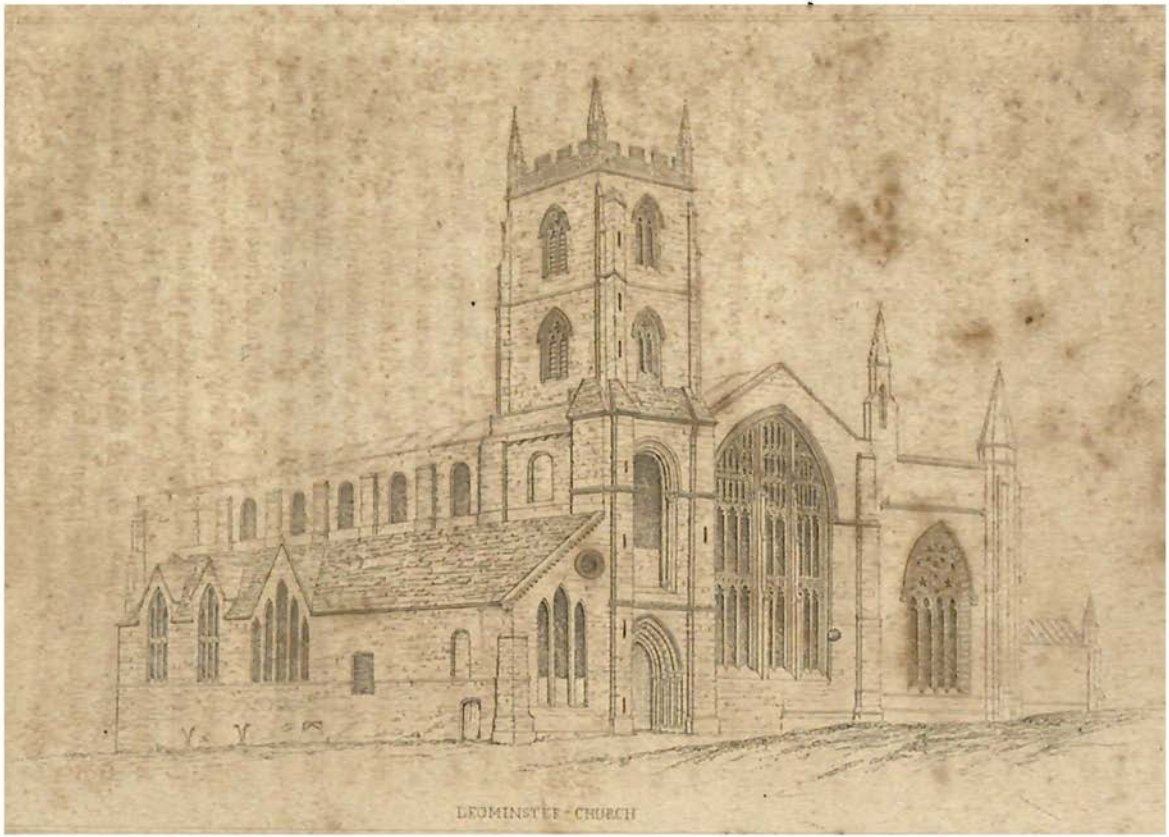
Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war.

Our Town has been in times past the frequent theatre of the contests of war: may it, in the new era opening before it, develope, achieve, and perfect many victories of peace!

The Author thus brings to a conclusion the task that he had undertaken. He has given through a duration of twelve centuries the history of the Town and Borough of Leominster. He has traced the origin of its Ecclesiastical and of its Civil institutions; the gradual growth of its importance; the different phases of its government; the changes and vicissitudes which it has experienced. He has illustrated at various times the sentiments and feelings of its Inhabitants. He has shown their loyalty to their Sovereign, their general attachment to the established religion of the land, their spirit of animated devotion to their local interests. He trusts that he has said enough to obtain from its present population a greater regard and affection for their antient and honourable Town. He is unable to read the future; but during a portion of the period occupied in the preparation of this book, a very general impression prevailed that the old landmarks would be removed, and that the political privileges of this Borough, preserved through so many centuries, were about to be curtailed. He trusts that this threatened diminution of its honours and of its importance in the State may have passed away, and that it may long continue to exercise its political privileges and franchise. He would wish that its honours might

With increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow.

* He would ask leave to take a wider view, and to express a hope that the same great and good Providence which hath hitherto extended over our beloved country the Ægis of His protection, will still continue to bless her Ruler with grace, her senators with wisdom, her people with understanding; so that in days to come, as in days gone by, England may be the foremost amongst the nations in promoting the freedom, happiness, and welfare of mankind!


LEOMINSTER CHURCH

LEOMINSTER PRIORY CHURCH.

BY EDWARD A. FREEMAN, M.A.

THE existing church of Leominster consists of the parochial portion of the ancient church of the Priory, namely the nave and certain additions to the south. It may be necessary to explain that, in some cases, monastic churches were the sole property of the monastery, while, in others, the convent and the parish in which it stood had a joint right in them. When a church was purely monastic, it of course came into the King's hands at the Dissolution, together with the other property of the monastery. In such a case it was preserved, dismantled, or entirely destroyed, as suited the pleasure of the King or his grantee. Thus, in the single city of Gloucester, the great Abbey Church of St. Peter remains perfect as the Cathedral Church: the churches of the Dominicans and Franciscans still exist, though mutilated and desecrated, whilst of the church of the Carmelites no trace whatever remains. In all these cases the monastic church was not the church of any parish, nor were the legal rights of any but the dissolved corporations themselves affected by its destruction. In the other class, where the church of the monastery was also the church of the parish, the joint possession was commonly found inconvenient, and it was often thought good to make a formal division of the building between the two sets of owners. The monastery took one part as its own, and the parish took another part as its own. The monastic churches

being commonly cruciform, the parish commonly took the western limb or part of it, that is, the nave of the original building; while the monks took the choir, transepts, and eastern chapels. The building thus divided remained, in point of architectural character, one church, but in point of legal possession, it became two. The two parts were indeed often spoken of as the "Parish Church," and the "Priory" or "Abbey Church" respectively, as if they had been quite distinct buildings. The two were commonly divided by a solid partition, and the parochial portion was treated, in all respects, as a distinct and perfect church. It had its own high altar at the east end of the nave, and the eastern part of the nave was marked off as the chancel of the parish church. In the like sort, the monks made, in their portion, a sort of small nave or ante-chapel, by placing the screen of their choir somewhat east of the partition. The best example of this arrangement may be seen in Dunster church, Somersetshire, where the constructive nave is arranged as a perfect church, with a rood-screen some way west of the central tower. The central tower and transepts form a sort of nave to the eastern limb, which is screened off as the monks' choir. Here the monastic portion remains untouched, though not now used for divine service. At Wymondham* and Binham, in Norfolk, otherwise equally instructive examples, only some ruined fragments remain of the eastern or monastic church.

Now when a monastery connected with a church of this kind came into the hands of Henry VIII., the King became possessed of all the property of the monks, but there was nothing in the dissolution of the monastery which at all affected the rights of the parish. The parish therefore retained its property in that part of the church which had been assigned to it, while that part which had been assigned to the monastery became the property of the King. As such it was dealt with, like the purely monastic churches, just as the King or his

* On this church the reader should consult Mr. Petit's admirable monograph in the Norwich Volume of the Archæological Institute.

grantees thought fit. Most commonly it was pulled down; sometimes it was merely dismantled, and still remains as a ruin; in a few fortunate cases it was bought by the parish or some benefactor, and added to the parish church. At Tewkesbury the Parish bought the choir and transepts; at Wymondham they bought the "abbey steeple," but not the choir. Hence it is that we find so many large churches where the nave is perfect, while the choir is destroyed or ruined. The nave was the parish church, and, as such, it still remains, while the choir the monastic church, and has therefore vanished.

I have thought it necessary to make these remarks on a subject not generally understood,* because Leominster Church is at once a good example of the process which I have just described, and has also some special peculiarities of its own, which make its appearance at first sight still more puzzling. It consists, as was above said, primarily of the nave of the original church, the choir and transepts, forming the monastic church, having been taken down at the Dissolution. But the large additions to the south have utterly changed its character, and are very likely to confuse the visitor at first sight. The monastic portion must have been destroyed immediately upon the Dissolution, as it was gone before Leland visited Leominster. But its foundations were happily discovered and excavated in 1853, and its extent and ground-plan can still be easily traced out in the garden lying to the east of the present church.

Leominster Church, when perfect, consisted of a nave and north aisle—the south aisle having given way to a large erection of two bodies larger than the nave itself—an engaged† tower at the west end of the nave, a central tower with the choir beneath it, north and south transepts with apses in their eastern faces, an apsidal presbytery forming the eastern limb, with a circumam-

* It is one which I have treated of incidentally in various monographs in various places. I would particularly refer to a letter on Waybourne Church, Norfolk, in the Gentleman's Magazine for July, 1860.

† That is one which does not project, but has the aisle continued as far as its west wall.

bient aisle and radiating apsidal chapels, and finally a Lady chapel with a square east end projecting from the aisle of the presbytery. The ground-plan, before the great southern addition to the nave, must have been almost identical with that of Gloucester Cathedral. The only difference is, that Leominster had a single western tower, while Gloucester originally had two, which have been since destroyed, and that at Gloucester the apse of the presbytery has been turned into one great east window.

The southern addition to the nave has so completely changed the appearance of the church from the west (the point from which the visitor is most likely to approach it), that I must add a few words on the west front before I go on to the general architectural history of the building. At first sight, the front seems to consist of a low gable, with a large window, evidently copied from the west window at Gloucester, between a north-western tower and what may easily be taken for an unfinished south-western one. The first glimpse of the building completely gives the notion of a west front with two towers, one of which has been left unfinished. Such, however, is not the case. The central and commanding object in the front is now certainly the gable and the great window, but the original nave is terminated by the tower, and to the north of it is still the original aisle, with its lean-to roof. The building terminating in the great window is merely part of that great southern addition which has almost swallowed up the original church. The southern and smaller body is finished with a flat parapet, which gives it the look of an unfinished tower, and in the first view, the lean-to aisle at the extreme north may easily escape notice, or may be taken for a mere double aisle or such like excrescence. It must be carefully remembered that the tower terminates the nave of the original church, and that all the splendid work to the south is a mere after-thought, obscuring and confusing the original design.

§ I.—THE NORMAN CHURCH.

Passing by vague traditions of some Welsh foundations of mythical antiquity, passing by even the real foundation of the

Mercian King Merwald, in 660, the connected history of Leominster Priory begins in the eleventh century, though there is no reason to suppose that any portions now remain of an earlier date than the twelfth. A monastery was founded at Leominster by Leofric, the great Earl of the Mercians.* I do not know the exact date, but probably between 1032 and 1046. He became Earl in or before the former year, when he signs a Charter of Cnut as "Leofric Dux,"† his signatures to earlier Charters being only "Minister," that is Thegn.‡ The foundation was for Nuns, as appears from the Abbess Eadgifu being carried off in 1046 by Swegen, the eldest son of Earl Godwin. After this the nunnery disappears from history. It had apparently been suppressed before the Domesday survey, when Leominster was a royal possession, and is mentioned as having previously belonged to Queen Eadgyth. There is no mention of the monastery as then existing. An Abbess indeed is mentioned as holding a small possession, but this seems to be the Abbess of Cormeilles in Normandy.§ It is not unlikely that the misconduct of Eadgifu may have led to the suppression of the house. At all events, the nunnery had ceased to exist before 1123, when Henry I. founded Reading Abbey, and annexed to it "the ruined monastery of Leominster."¶ Leland mentions a College of Secular Canons as having once existed at Leominster, but it is not easy to see at what time this was.

* "Leofricus cum conjuge Godiva, in Dei rebus munificus, monasteria multa constituit; Coventreiæ, Sanctæ Mariæ, Stove, Wenelok, *Leonense*, et multa alia."—Will. Malms. Gest. Regg. ii. § 196.

† Cod. Dip., IV., 39.

‡ In an earlier private charter (p. 32) of 1026, he certainly seems to sign as "Dux," but in an intermediate royal one, (p. 99,) he is "Minister." From 1032 he continues regularly a "Dux" or "Comes." But it is clear that the signatures to the Charter of 1026 are spurious.

§ Sir H. Ellis, however, takes for granted that it was the Abbess of Leominster. Introduction to Domesday, p. 363.

¶ "Duo olim diruta Monasteria Leofminstre et Celsi adjunxit." Will. Malms. de Gest. Pont. Lib. ii. Script. post Bed. p. 199, Ed. 1596.

A church must have existed soon after the gift of King Henry to Reading, as the altars of St. Mary Magdalen, St. Margaret, St. Katharine, and the Holy Cross were consecrated by Robert Bethune, Bishop of Hereford from 1131-48. These were, doubtless, altars in the chapels surrounding the presbytery, and the fact points to the completion, very possibly, of the whole church, certainly of its eastern part, before 1148. At Leominster, as a parish church, the nave would hardly be delayed in the way that was often done with purely monastic buildings.

I will now proceed to describe Leominster Priory, as it stood on the completion of the earliest church, of which any portion now remains.

Choir, Presbytery, &c.—Of the eastern or monastic part of the church the foundations only remain. As Leland says, the Priory church was "but a small thing;" that is, it was merely a short Norman presbytery, if anything, even shorter than usual in comparison with the nave. To judge from the foundations also, it would seem to have been somewhat narrower than the nave, and moreover their centres do not coincide. This must have produced a good deal of awkwardness in the treatment of the lantern-arches. The choir was doubtless originally under the central tower, according to the common rule in Norman churches, and it is hardly possible that it could, as was commonly the case, have been removed into the eastern limb after the division of the church between the Priory and the parish. For the whole length of tower and eastern limb is only about 55 feet, and, as the high altar doubtless stood on the chord of the apse, the space left in the eastern limb would hardly be of the size of a common parochial chancel, and would be quite incapable of containing the presbytery and the choir also. It is therefore to be supposed that, though the nave, as its preservation shows, certainly belonged to the parish, yet that the partition between it and the monks' choir was less effectually made than in some other cases. We shall, as we go on, find some other appearances which look the same way.

The presbytery or eastern limb was surrounded by an aisle going round the apse and furnished with radiating chapels. This was the case at Gloucester, but not at Peterborough, where the Norman aisles stopped, and were not continued round the apse. The circumambient aisle with radiating chapels occurred also at St. Bartholomew's in London, and indeed was not an uncommon arrangement during the Norman period. But, in England at least, it would be difficult to show an unaltered example remaining. In France there is a most exquisite one, quite perfect, in the church of St. Martin at Estampes. Leominster, like Gloucester, had a chapel diverging on each side, and doubtless a third projected at the extreme east end, but this, again as at Gloucester, gave way, as the foundations show, to a larger Lady Chapel with a square end. As no fragment of its detail survives, it is impossible to say anything as to its date. It is certainly remarkable, when we consider the very small size of the eastern part of Leominster church, that so complicated an arrangement should have been chosen, and one which, in England, is seldom found except in buildings of much greater size.

The transepts, on the other hand, are of very considerable size, both as to length and breadth. They are, in proportion to the scale of the building, very much larger than those at Gloucester. But they do not seem to have had aisles, like those at Winchester and Christ Church, Oxford. Eastern aisles they clearly had not, but merely an apse attached to the east end; whether they had western aisles is not quite certain. The fact that the eastern bay of the north aisle was destroyed together with the transepts looks as if they had; on the other hand a western aisle to a transept is not very common, and is sometimes not added even when there is an eastern one, as at Peterborough. If the south transept at Leominster had a western aisle, it must have been swallowed up by the great southern addition to the nave. The north transept has not been exhumed.

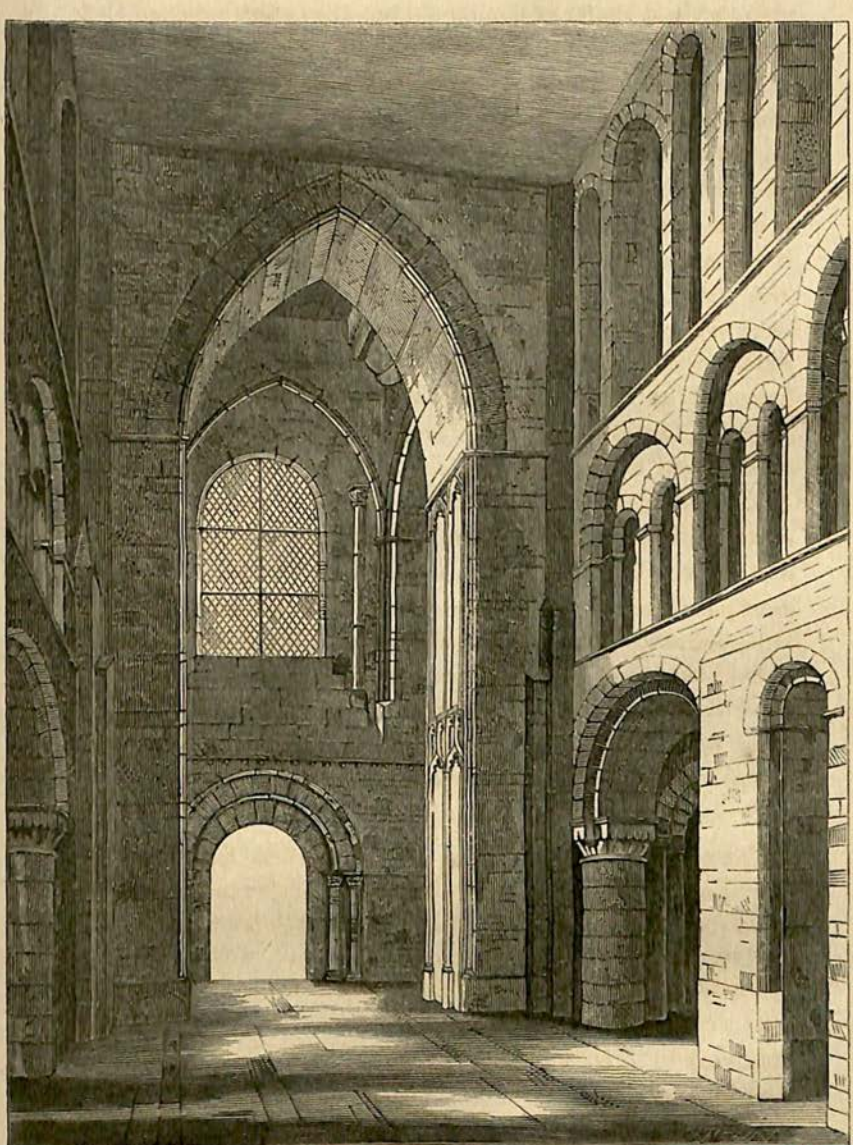
The lantern piers, of which portions remain, acting as buttresses to the present east end, were perfectly square and

plain, without shafts or mouldings, but the orders retained their untouched rectangular section.

The part of the destroyed building where the best preserved traces remain is the south aisle, where the foundations rise so high that part of the plinth of the external basement remains. The walls of the aisle have a double range of flat pilasters—a marked characteristic of the whole church—the inner ones of course acting as roof-shafts and the external ones as buttresses. The form of the piers cannot be made out, except that there seem to be projections towards the aisle matching those in the aisle walls. This seems to show that the aisles were vaulted. The basement on which the arcade stood exists for a considerable extent on the south side; the height of the pavement can also be made out in the south transept, as some tiles remain *in situ*.

The whole of the foundations, with the exception of the enlarged Lady Chapel, seem to be of untouched Norman work, so that any later alterations in the presbytery and transepts must have been confined to mere insertions in the superstructure. One such at least there was, in the form of a Decorated sepulchral arch at the south end of the transept, of remarkable height, and exhibiting clear signs of mediæval whitewash. Above this, in 1852, was a Norman string, evidently *in situ*, which had vanished before the excavations in 1853. So easily may important evidence on such points be lost.

The Nave.—The Norman nave is perfect, and is a noble specimen of the simple majesty which that style can assume even in its most unadorned form. The internal architecture is plain to a degree which, in any style but Romanesque, would be utterly intolerable; no Gothic and no Italian designer could have ventured on producing so large a building so utterly devoid of enrichment. The building, in point of size, is a minster of the second order; its nave, about 125 feet long, comes about midway between those of Waltham and Crowland. It consists of seven bays, including the one occupied by the tower: the other six form a separate system. The threefold division of



LEOMINSTER CHURCH, NAVE LOOKING WEST.

height is well preserved; but it cannot be said that there is any vertical division at all. Not only are there no roof-shafts to form the division into bays, but the number of arches in the triforium agrees neither with that in the clerestory above nor with that in the arcade below. While the arcade and clerestory have each six bays, the triforium has nine. The arcade, taken alone, is somewhat irregular. The arches east of the tower form a series of plain round arches of two orders, rising from huge cylindrical piers with round capitals, or rather imposts. But this series is not uninterrupted. In the second bay from the tower on each side there is a singular anomaly. Here there is, instead of the ordinary pier and arch, a flat projection, like those in which Norman doorways are often set, in which a very tall and narrow round-headed arch is inserted. The cause of this singularity I do not at all understand, and I do not remember to have ever seen anything like it elsewhere. I have heard it called a "processional arch," on the ground, I believe, that it is opposite to the doorway leading from the cloister; but if by this is meant that it was an arch through which the monks passed in processions, I certainly see no reason why such an arch should be narrower than its fellows. In the eastern bay again we find a solid wall, with similar projections containing mere doorways, instead of pier-arches, on both sides. This was doubtless because this bay was occupied by the rood-loft, which, had the regular arcade been continued, would have completely blocked up the arch. A blank space in such a position is not uncommon elsewhere. The result of these interruptions is that there are only two distinct piers on each side, grand specimens of the vast cylindrical mass, so distinctive of our English Romanesque. Its use here is remarkable, as, from the general tendency of the architecture of the church, as shown in the triforium and the lantern arches, we should rather have looked for a rectangular pier. The imposts are round, of the multiplied cushion form; the abaci have delicate ornaments, chevron, billet, and others, wrought on all on the south side and on the two

eastern ones on the north. The finish of these evidently shows that mere plainness of work in this style is no sign of early date. The piers and arches have also large remains of painting on them, and some apparent signs of the effect of fire.

I said above that the aisles of the presbytery seem to have been vaulted. Such is not the case with those of the nave, nor are there any signs, such as we so often see, of vaulting contemplated, but never added. The triforium, therefore, must always have been something of a sham. And indeed it consists merely of blank arcades, none of which seem ever to have gone through the wall. Each of its nine bays consists of an arch containing two smaller arches, all plain and square-edged. The six clerestory windows are perfectly plain, splayed, but without any passage. Externally the bays are divided by small pilasters; internally the windows are made members of an arcade, two blank arches, quite plain and square-edged, being placed between every two windows.

The Western Tower.—The upper part of the tower is a Perpendicular addition or reconstruction, but it is evident that a Norman tower was at least designed and begun, and there is no reason why it may not have been finished. In most cases of two towers, the western one is a Perpendicular addition. Such however is not the case at Ely, and at Wimborne the present Perpendicular tower seems to have supplanted a Norman one. At Leominster the style of the bay under the tower is a little later than that of the rest of the nave, but the addition—if addition it was—must have been made before the end of the twelfth century. That a Norman tower was designed is shown by the whole arrangements within and without; though the present belfry-arch is a Perpendicular insertion, the responds of its wider Norman predecessor are still to be seen. Arches are also thrown across the aisles; the exterior has a wider pilaster and a corbel-table, and the arches from the tower into the aisles and the triforium above them are both quite different from those in the rest of the nave.

The arch into the south aisle is either obtusely pointed or else the crown of the arch has given way; the responds are of two orders, perfectly plain and square-edged, like those at St. Alban's and at Chepstow. The triforium in this bay has a much larger arch than in the other bays, there are no smaller arches under it, and it really goes through the wall. The bay of the aisle below—I am of course speaking of the north side only—has a very plain and rough quadripartite vault, and retains the only Norman window, one now blocked, remaining in the wall. The arch between this bay and the rest of the aisle was blocked at some later time, probably to make a distinct chapel, and the blocking wall covered on its west face with paintings.

Of the Norman tower no part remains higher than the clerestory walls. But the general design of the west front can easily be made out. The tower rose between the two steep lean-to roofs of the aisles, of which the northern one still retains its old pitch, as is shown by the chevron under the roof-line. The west window is happily spared; it is a large single roundheaded one, with large shafts inside and out. The west doorway is very curious; unusually massive shafts are combined with an obtusely pointed arch. This last fact is remarkable; for, though the pointed arch was now beginning to be freely used, doorways are just the feature where the round arch stood its ground long after all other Romanesque detail had gone out of use. Within, the round arch is still employed, and, instead of a mere rear-arch, there is a receding series, which is a great improvement in the internal effect. The capitals, within and without, exhibit an interesting series of grotesque figures and fretwork patterns. On each side of the doorway and window are pilasters dividing the tower from the aisles: smaller ones occupy the corners of the aisles themselves. The extent of the south aisle is clearly shown by a break in the masonry under the present great west window. The original west window of the north aisle has been replaced by a plain Early English triplet, but a small Norman circle still exists above the vaulting.

DATE.—There can, I think, be little doubt that the whole of the Romanesque church belongs to the twelfth century; being the church which, or a part of which, was consecrated in 1130. The nave may not have been finished quite at the same time, though, considering that Leominster church was parochial as well as monastic, the nave is not likely to have been delayed in the same way as often happened in churches purely conventual. But the tower-bay must be rather later, though very likely contemplated from the beginning. The extreme plainness of the nave might tempt us, with some plausibility, to suppose that it is a vestige of the church of Leofric, but the arguments are conclusive the other way. Leominster nave is very plain, but the little ornament it has is decidedly Norman, and not very early Norman; also the choir, which must surely be Henry the First's work, seems to have been exactly the same in style ast he nave. But a church built in the earlier days of Earl Leofric could hardly have been Norman of the very earliest kind. His foundation existed in 1046, before the "novum compositionis genus,"* or Norman style, had been introduced by Edward at Westminster and Harold at Waltham. A church built by Leofric would have been in the old English form of Romanesque, the true native style such as we see at Deerhurst and Bradford-on-Avon.† Now this style is not at all like plain Norman; it differs in kind, nor is it at all conspicuous for plainness, but rather the contrary; it decidedly affects ornament, though its ornament is of a very rude kind. The Romanesque nave at Leominster is large, unadorned, but of good work, and the little enrichment it has is of an advanced and delicate kind. A nave built by Leofric would probably have been much smaller and loaded with a good deal of barbaric enrichment. Leominster church is Norman, and not very early Norman; it has not the special interest which would attach to a building of the eleventh

* See Will. Malm. Gest. Regg. ii. § 223. Matt. Par., p. 2

† I have not seen Stowe, where work of Leofric is said to exist. Deerhurst, the work of the contemporary Earl Odda, is decidedly Old-English.

century, but it is valuable in the history of architecture as showing the fallacy of the notion that rich Norman work is necessarily late and plain Norman work necessarily early.

§ II.—ADDITIONS TO THE NORMAN CHURCH.

EARLY ENGLISH ADDITIONS.—I have already remarked that, though the preservation of the nave clearly shows that that part of the church was the property of the parish yet it does not seem to have been so completely cut off from the monastic portion, as in some other cases. It is clear that the partition across the western arch of the lantern was a rood-loft, and not a solid wall serving as a reredos to the parish high altar, such as we see at Waltham, Crowland, and Wymondham. It follows therefore that the monastic church can have had no nave of its own east of that arch, such as still exists at Dunster. We can therefore hardly suppose that the monks were entirely denied access to the nave, as otherwise a procession would have become an impossibility. If this was the case, we can fully understand why the people of Leominster, instead of confining themselves to the nave, and fitting it up, as elsewhere, as a distinct parish church, with its own choir and high altar, preferred to make a large addition to the south of the nave, which should be entirely their own. A consecration of the church in 1239* fixes the date of this great change. The outer wall of the south aisle of the Norman nave was taken down, and instead of the narrow Norman aisle, a large building was erected of much the same size as the Norman nave itself. The rebuilding of Norman aisles on a greater scale is indeed no uncommon process; it may be seen at St. Woolos at Newport, at Wymondham, at Clun in Shropshire, Polesworth in Warwickshire, and, above all, at Great Yarmouth. But at Leominster one can hardly doubt that the new structure was intended to supplant the old Norman part as the main body of the parish church. This it still remains, the Norman nave being now disused. As it stands at present the addition consists

* Monasticon, IV., 517.

of two bodies divided by an arcade. The question now arises, does this arrangement date from the change completed in 1239, or was the second southern body a further addition? That southern body, as it now stands, is undoubtedly a Decorated building: the doubtful point is, whether it succeeded an Early English body on the same side, or was added to an Early English building of one body only. Did the original arcade remain, of course the question could be settled in a moment, but unluckily the existing piers and arches are palpably modern, having been erected since a fire which greatly damaged this and other parts of the church in 1699. The matter therefore must be left in doubt. On the one hand the south porch and the piscina in the extreme southern body are Early English, and, if this body were a Decorated addition, we must suppose that they were removed and rebuilt, a process quite possible, but still not to be assumed without strong reasons. On the other hand, if the Early English addition contained two bodies, it is hard to conceive any adequate motive for the complete rebuilding of the southern one within a century after. For if the porch is *in situ*, the second Early English body must have been quite as large as the present Decorated one, so that no practical need led to the rebuilding, and if it was merely wished to make a splendid display of windows in the new style, that might have been done by merely inserting them in the Early English walls, or at most by following the common practice of rebuilding from the string below the windows. But, except the porch and the piscina, the whole of this southern body is unmixed Decorated work from the ground. The question is a difficult one, and I must decline to dogmatize on it, but on the whole I think the balance of probability is in favour of supposing that the Decorated body was strictly an addition and not a reconstruction, and that the porch and piscina were built up again. It is indeed possible that the porch may not be *in situ* and that some narrower Early English aisle was attached to the main Early English body. But I know no reason to suppose this. If it was so, the ground-plan of the western limb of Leominster

church at this time would have resembled that of Higham Ferrers, where we find a double nave, two bodies of equal size, with a smaller aisle beyond each.

It is curious how little Early English work now remains in the church. Later changes have left very small traces of the original building added in 1239. In the west front the insertion of the great Perpendicular west window has left nothing except a pilaster and some strings. The Decorated addition, the destruction of the transepts, and the fire of 1699 have, between them, obliterated all traces to the south and east. It is curious indeed that so little should actually remain of an addition whose existence rests on such clear evidence, both historical and architectural. It must be remembered that the south wall of the nave was left untouched, and the new building built up against it. The clerestory windows are thus visible, which always has a strange effect. Instances on a smaller scale occur at St. Woolos, Clun, and Polesworth, and also in Blackmore Priory church, Essex.

Of the other Early English portions, the porch doorways are rather rich, with flowered capitals, but both mouldings and bowtells are rather shallow and oddly arranged, seeming to disregard the system of orders. They rather resemble some of the richer examples in North Wales than the Somersetshire and South Welsh style which reaches from Glastonbury to Llanthony. The porch seems to have been designed for vaulting which has never been added. I have already mentioned the triplet inserted at the west end of the north aisle. An insertion was also made at the same time in its north wall. This wall has been very much patched at various, some of them very recent, times. The most important change has been the insertion of three windows under dormer gables. This was done, as in the similar cases at Brecon, Waltham, Malmesbury, because a larger window was wanted than the original small Norman lights, and as the presence of the cloister rendered it impossible to take it down lower; height was therefore gained by carrying up the

window into the roof. One of these dormers contains a plain Early English quintuplet, evidently from the same hand as the triplet in the west front. The date of the other two may be doubted. They are of rough and bungling work, so as to look like quite late insertions, and the upper part is wholly of wood; but the tracery is of a form which, though certainly far from beautiful, is decidedly characteristic of the early Decorated work of the district. It is therefore possible that they may really be of that date, and their roughness of execution may be attributed to their not being on the show side.

DECORATED CHANGES.—The great work of the later days of the early Decorated or Geometrical style was the addition of the extreme southern aisle. This is a building of singular magnificence, and is in fact one of the noblest examples in existence of that variety of Gothic architecture. The southern portion of the west front was finished with a flat parapet, with a polygonal stair-turret at the angle, and a bell-cot near the junction of the new work with the Early English. The porch doorways were now most probably removed and rebuilt, but the porch was otherwise finished in the new style, having three niches with ball-flower. The pinnacles are octagons set on squares, forming the exact miniature of a broach spire; similar ones are found in the neighbouring churches of Bodenham and Marden. But the glory of Leominster at this date is the south side of the church, with its series of five magnificent windows of equal size regularly arranged between buttresses. As at Dorchester and Bristol Cathedral, the absence of a clerestory, certainly no improvement in the general effect, gives greater opportunity for producing a splendid range of this kind. The main lines of the tracery are of the simplest Geometrical kind, but there is a rich filling-in of Foil figures, similar to other neighbouring examples at Hereford, Ludlow, and Marden. The whole composition, jambs, mullions, and tracery, is, like some, but not all, of the other examples, profusely loaded with ball-flower. The lavish use of this beautiful ornament is eminently

characteristic of the Decorated style as it occurs in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, districts where its use was evidently introduced earlier and continued later than was commonly the case elsewhere. If there is any fault in these splendid windows, it is that the secondary mullions are somewhat too slender. The window in the west front is of the same kind. Two of the series were shorn of their beautiful tracery in 1812 and common intersecting mullions substituted. The pedimented buttresses between the windows are rather plain, a great portion of their height being without any set-off; the parapet is very good, pierced with trefoil arches cut in the solid. The Decorated strings go a little way round the east end, where they are met by the Debased work; the present east window is a wretched affair; but the south transept must always have hindered the existence of one worthy to be the crowning point of such a series. Within, three beautiful sedilia, rich with ball-flower, were added to the preserved Early English piscina. The altar to which they were attached was probably that of the parochial Lady Chapel, which received an endowment in 1377, not long after the completion of the work. The Decorated tomb in the south transept must also have been inserted about the same time.

The ground-plan of the church was now completed. The old Norman minster had now received those successive additions to the south of its nave which so completely altered its whole character. The parish had enlarged its portion into a stately building, compared with which that left to the monks was indeed, as Leland says, a "small thing." Probably the two later bodies now constituted the main body of the parish church. They were connected with the south transept with doorways, traces of which may still be seen, and doorways of course imply that they were cut off from it by a solid wall.

Perpendicular Changes.—It is probable that something was done in the monastic part of the church in the early days of the Perpendicular style, as "the Chancel of the Holy Cross," which most likely means one of the

transepts, is said to have received a new roof in the year 1389. A more certain, and probably more important, work was the completion of the north western tower. This is clearly early in the style, retaining something of Decorated character in its windows, and still more in the use of the ball-flower in the panelling of its parapet. The pinnacles also are of the same brooch-spire form as those of the porch. The new stage is much smaller than the older one below, and is joined on to the Norman work in a curious way not very easy to describe.

Inside, a narrow Perpendicular belfry-arch supplanted its wider Norman predecessor. It is partially panelled, but the ornament diminishes as it ascends, and the actual soffit of the arch receives none at all. At the same time three arches were thrown across the other three sides of the tower, and shafts placed in the angles, seemingly designed to carry a vault which has never been added. Of these arches the western one conceals the rear-arch of the west window, but, by an unusual exercise of forbearance, that beautiful relic of the original building was spared any further change. It is really wonderful how Perpendicular innovators could deny themselves so tempting an opportunity of making a new west window.

For the Early English composition, whatever was its nature, which occupied the next division of the west front, the designers of this period, or of one rather later, had much less respect. The superb window which has usurped its place seems to belong to a later stage of the Perpendicular style than the tower, and one can hardly doubt that it was designed in direct imitation of the great west window of Gloucester Cathedral. It is however a great improvement on that most clumsy production. The bold pointed arch at Leominster is a great improvement upon the untoward form employed at Gloucester; and though taste or necessity led the authors of both to the same expedient of supporting the primary mullions by large detached buttresses, those at Leominster are far from having the same heavy and awkward appearance as the Gloucester examples.

Besides the tower and this window, there is no good Perpendicular work of any consequence in the church.

LATER CHANGES.—Immediately upon the Dissolution, as I have before said, the monastic portion of the church, including the central tower, transepts, presbytery, and eastern chapels, was pulled down. At the same time, for whatever reason, the eastern bay of the north aisle shared the same fate. A Debased east window was inserted at the end of the nave and another in the triforium range—now become external—of the destroyed bay. The fire of 1699 seems to have chiefly affected the great southern addition. There are signs that the original nave did not wholly escape, but it was only in the southern part that actual rebuilding seems to have been needed. The east end of the two bodies and the arcade between them belong to the work after the fire. The new east end is easily distinguishable, both in its masonry and in its central east window,—the extreme southern one seems to have been renewed still more recently—from the work in a line with it of the date of the Dissolution. It is just the difference between extremely bad, but still living Gothic, and a mere imitation of its forms when they were no longer understood. The arcade is perhaps better, five pointed arches resting upon tall round pillars. As the two bodies were always of the same height, they may, in their general proportions, be no unfair representatives of their predecessors.

CONVENTUAL BUILDINGS.—The domestic buildings of the monastery lay to the north of the church. The remains are not very extensive. The cloister was in its usual place against the nave. Some slight traces of a vaulted roof may still be made out, and there is a small Perpendicular doorway into the church opposite the narrow arch already described inside. The other buildings which surrounded the cloister square have all vanished; the only part of the Priory still remaining lies farther to the east. This, after passing through many vicissitudes, has at last settled down into the office of a union workhouse. Its adaptation to

that purpose has robbed it of all beauty of outline, by raising its walls, lowering its roof, and inserting a row of ugly windows. A large store however of the original windows still remains, and the bold way in which the building stems the stream during its whole length, is in no way interfered with.

It will, I think, be seen from the above account that though the peculiar shape of Leominster church must always have prevented any beauty or justness of proportion, and though it has suffered even more than the usual martyrdom of a parochialized minster, yet, on the whole, it may claim no contemptible place among churches of its own class, while, as a curious study of architectural history, it is inferior to none.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER I.

ON THE PARISH CHURCH.

CONTENTS.—The foundation of the Chauntries in the Parish Church.—Their destruction and appropriation.—The Parish Church adapted to the Reformed worship.—Its accessories worthy of its size and importance.—The Books placed in its Chancel.—General description of its interior.—Its antient Monuments.—Description of its exterior.—Its Chafnet.—Its wooden Brooch.—Its Destruction by fire.—Its Restoration.—List of subscriptions.—The erection of its Galleries.—Its Font, Reredos, Table of Benefactions.—Its Sacramental Plate.—Its Organ, and list of Organists.—Its Bells and Chimes.—The planting of the Avenues, and erection of the Gates, in its Churchyard.—Its Registers, and Burials in woollen.—Extracts from its Vestry Books.—List of existing, and of lost, Benefactions.—Its list of Briefs.—The separation of Docklow, Stoke, and Ivington.—Its Vicarage, and list of Vicars.—Its Grammar School, and list of Schoolmasters.—Its Parochial Schools.—The Forbury.

THE Church of Leominster, at the period of the Reformation, contained within itself two separate Churches; the one, the Church of the Monks (Ecclesia Monachorum); the other, the Church of the Parish (Ecclesia Parochialis).* Each of these contained, according to the custom of those times, a series of altars, or smaller chapels. In the Church of the Monks the chief altars were those of St. Peter and St. Paul, of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Catharine, St. Margaret, St. Andrew or St. Antony,† and of the Blessed Virgin. In the Church of the

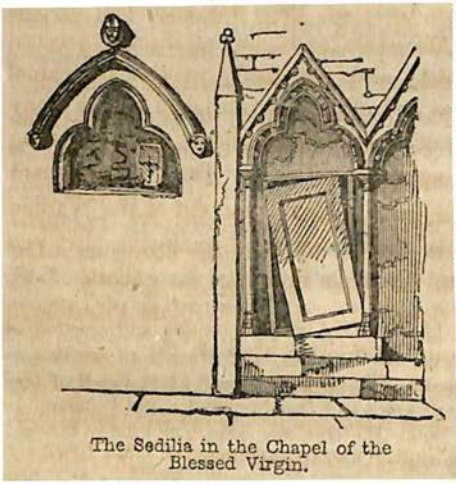
* See note in page 41 of this History.

† The Author in a note, p. 40 of this History, has placed St. Anthony's Chapel in the S. West corner of the present Parish Church. He is on further enquiry more disposed to believe that it stood in the N. West corner of the Priory Church. There was a tradition to this effect when Symonds visited Leominster in 1646. Symond's Diary, p. 267.

Parish were the three Chauntries of the Blessed Virgin, of our Lady of Pity, and of the Holy Trinity.

The first in importance of these was the Lady Chapel.* It was established and richly endowed in the latter part of the 14th century.

In the 45th year of Edward III., 1372, a Writ was issued from the King's Justices, to enquire if the King would receive injury, *i. e.*, if the King's rights would be infringed upon by granting a license to John de Pyrinton, Walter de Crambe, and others, to bestow 14 Messuages, three acres of land, twelve acres of meadow, 40s. in rent, and a Messuage, in Leominster, Hennor, Stretford, and Eaton, to a Chaplain to perform service daily in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church of Leominster. Leave was given, and on the 10th of November, 1377, John de Pyrinton and others gave these said lands and tenements "to be assigned to a Prste to celebrate Divine Srvice in ye Chappell of ore Lady in the Churche of Leomynstr every daye, accordynge to the ordynce of the Founders, their heires, Assignes, for evr."†



The Sedilia in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin.

The Chauntry of the Holy Trinity was founded on this wise. "John Fletcher, of Leomynstr by his laste Will and Testamt made the 2nd daye of Januarye, Anno dnī 1444, did bequeth

* This Chapel was situated at the end of the South aisle. Its Sedilia yet remain. It now forms the Vestry of the Parish Church.

† Certificates of Colleges and Chantries, Hen. VIII. and Edw. VI., Hereford and Worcester, No. 25, in the Public Record Office.

and geve unto Matilde, his wyffe, all that his ten^{t} in Leomynst^{r}, to have and to hold durynge her lyff; and after her decease to Hugh, her sonne, and his heires of his body lawfully begotten: and for defaulte of heires to rem̄ to the s^{r}vice for ev^{r}. As well now is the saied Hugh deceased, as the sayd Matild̄ w^{t}out issue."

The Chauntry of our Lady of Pity was enriched by the possession of Philip ap Morgan's lands, but no distinct account remains to attest the piety and generosity of the individual donors. These Chauntries and altars were enriched by the many smaller gifts and obituary offerings of individuals. The following is a specimen of such smaller donations:—"Deed of Covenant between the Prior of Leominster with the consent of the Warden of the Altar of———, in the Church of Leominster, that two shillings and sixpence shall be taken in lieu of six gallons of oil, as the rent of a house in South St., paid by William Fitzrichard of Hennor, to maintain a light on the said altar."*

These three Chauntries were finally dissolved at the end of the reign of Edward VI., and their lands, subject to certain conditions, (related at length in this Chapter,) were purchased of the Crown by the Bailiff and Burgesses. The extinction of these Chauntries, and the removal of the various altars restored the fabric of the Church, in its retention of one font and of one altar, to a greater consistency with the doctrine and teachings of the Reformed branch of the Church Catholic, established in this land.

The Church retained with its one font and one altar all the accessories and accompaniments worthy of its position, as the Mother Church of so extensive and important a district. It had a clock, an organ, bells, and chimes. The inventory made out year by year, and the Churchwardens' Accounts, contain these entries.

"It^{m}. 7 Bells, one paire of Orgāns, and one ould case of Orgāns.
[There were six Bells in the Bell-house, and the Sancte Bell.]

* The Leominster Chartulary, in the British Museum, Dom. A. III.

1619. Paid for a Rope for the littell Bell .. ijs. viijd.
1624. P^d Mr. Smyth, organist, in p^t of his wage iij*l.* xvs.
1635. P^d Wm. Long for keepynge the Clocke for a whole year .. .. viijs. ivd.

The Church had also the Homilies, Bp. Jewell's Works, and the Paraphrase of Erasmus,* placed in the Chancel on wooden stands, and fastened with iron chains, so that the Parishioners might come in and read at any time at their own option. It had however no galleries, no square pen-shaped pews, (which, by the very position of face to face prevent the possibility of private and serious devotion,) no Communion Table protruding into the Nave, no Vestry defacing the antient Sedilia and the beautiful tracery. Its rich symmetry and extended array of "storied windows richly dight;" its ample proportions displayed from wall to wall, ornamented with its monumental brasses, and book-stands; its wide open seats all placed in one direction; its embossed and decorated timber roofs, gave it a noble and church-like appearance. Is not its restoration to the image and superscription of its former self "a consummation devoutly to be wished?"

The Church also contained some antient monuments and painted glass windows, filled in with the arms and heraldic bearings of antient families connected with the Town. A short account, and even some imperfect sketches of these are yet to be found in Symonds' Church Notes, in a scarce Tract in the Addenda to Weaver's Funeral Monuments, and in some Heraldic Notes, preserved in MS., in the College of Arms in London.

* Erasmus's Paraphrase was originally published at Basle in 1516. It was translated into English under the auspices of Henry VIII. Strype, in his Memorials, Book II., c. 2, Anno 1547, makes this statement:—"There was now a book of Homilies prepared for present use, to be read in all churches for the instruction of the people; and Erasmus's Paraphrase upon the New Testament, in English, was to be set up in all churches, for the better instruction of priests in the sense and knowledge of the Scriptures. And both these books, by the King's injunctions aforementioned, were commanded to be taught and learned."

There were in the Priory Church:—"In the north yle window of the old church, called St. Anthonyes Church, very old:

Quarterly, Per fess indented argent and azure, in the first quarter a lion passant gardant or, [CROFT].

An old altar-tombe with alabaster on the topp, in black lynes the two pictures, and in a large forme the effigies of our Saviour on the crosse.

Thome Phillips, ob. 1530, & Isabela ux. ejus."

There were in the Parish Church:—"In the middle yle of the church, neare a lower north pillar, upon an altar-tombe lyes this fashiond statue of a woman fairely carved:

The figure of a female habited in a long robe with hanging sleeves doubled ermine, the collar folded down, having the neck bare. Round her neck "a cheyne buckled," the waist encircled by a "great belt and buckle," and the hands joined upon the breast. The hair, which is confined across the forehead by a fillet, is extended on either side of the head, forming two enormous plaits."

[This is said by Symonds to be the tomb of the Lady Jane Clifford; but it is more probably the tomb of Matilda Mowbray, (niece to Sir Walter Clifford,) who built the great west window, and was a benefactress, having given to the men of Leominster five meadows of pasture land lying between the Lug and Horsewall Wood.*]

"A flat stone in the chancel, the pictures of a man and woman scratcht in black lynes. This coate between them, he in armor:

Hic jacent corpora Radulfi Hakesluit et Eliz. ux'is sue, qui obierunt 1 Maii, A.D. M° cccc.xvii., quorum animabus propitietur Deus. Amen.

Quarterly, 1, three battleaxes in fess [HAKLUYT]; 2, three towers; 3, three "imperfect;" 4, three birds "sable."

Upon the same in other characters:

Hic jacet corpus Milonis Hackluit gen. qui ob. 21 Junii, 1621.

"Upon another flat stone with a brass Lamina is this inscription:

* See Gough's Camden, vol. ii., p. 458.

Catharine, wife of John Barneby, Esq., daughter to Sir Tho. Cornwall, knight, ob. 30 Sep., 1633.

A lion passant between three escallops [for Barneby; but? if correct], impaling, CORNWALL."*

Mr. Blount gives also these additional monuments:

"Upon a raised Monument in the south side of the Chancel a flat stone with this inscription:

Here lyeth the body of Isaac Seward, Esq., who departed this life the 29th day of April, 1652. Aged 68 years.

And in the midst his arms are engraven in brass, viz., gules, a fesse arg., with Ermines between 3 scallop shells or.

Within a pew belonging to Eton there lies interred, Wallop Brabazon, 2nd son to the Earl of Meath, who died————but has no monument, other than his arms hanging in gules, three Martlets sable on a bend or.

Upon another flat stone with a brass fillet,

Here lies the body of Eliz., the wife of Simon Seward, Gent., eldest daughter of Tho. Jay of Middleton, Gent. She deceased the first day of October, 1658.

Upon a blue marble tablet fixed in the Chancel wall is this incription:

In memoriam Elizabethæ uxor: opt: char: Henrici Studder Rectoris Ecclesiæ de Collingburn-ducis in agro Sarum, et Briga. ux: filiæ Georgij Hunt ejusdem ecclesiæ ad annos quinquaginta Rectoris, filii Johannis Hunt vivi comburio qui pro fide evangelica adjudicatus erat, morte Mariæ Reg: ereptus. Johannes Tombes, Hujus Ecclesiæ Vicar. mœrens posuit.

Filia Præconis verbi, Præconis et uxor,
Præco avus et proavus, cui prope martyr erat:
Hæres ejusdem fidei et pietatis, Eliza
Hic posuit carnem, spiritus Astra tenet.
Filia quæ primum dein conjux optima, summis
Jam fruitur Christi, conjuge, patre, Deo.

Obiit Anno Dni, 1633, Dec. 15. Ætatis 20 Mens: 4."

"These are all the monuments which are to be found in this antient and great Church, and no wonder, since before the dissolution of Religious houses, it is probable many persons of

* Symond's Diary, p. 266.

quality chose to be interred in the Priory Church, though their bones might have rested more peaceably in this."*

There is also in Weaver's Addenda a copy of a curious old Saxon Inscription found by Mr. Hackluyt of Eaton, "uppon a brassen plate on the wall of the south side of the Chirche of Leomynstre, A.D. 1592. All the letters were cutt oute in brasse, and braised upon a braison plate, and faestened upon a timbre lette into the wall, and had been washed over with white, at such time as the said Chirche had been amended and cleaned."

No trace nor vestige of any of these monuments remains.

Thus men of marble piecemeal waste away,
When whose the image we no longer read,
And monuments themselves memorials need.—CRABBE.

The exterior of the Church was at this period very different to what it is at present. It was not adorned by any of those graceful avenues of trees which now add so greatly to its beauty, nor enclosed in by walls. It had a large Lychgate or Schallenge at its main entrance in Church Street, stiles in the places of gates at its other approaches, and mere wooden posts and rails around a portion of its enclosure. A large net for the capture of crows and choughs (which were supposed to be destructive of the sown corn) was suspended from its Western Tower, and some of its windows were closed up with boards to keep out the pigeons, and the Tower itself was surmounted by a wooden brooch or spire.

Neither was the Church kept so cleanly, nor treated with the respect and reverence customary in our time; for spiders were allowed to accumulate till they were destroyed in large numbers, and some of the Parishioners wore their hats, while others were accompanied with their dogs and mastiffs in their attendance on Divine Service. The following extracts from the Court Leets and Churchwardens' Accounts are sufficient testimonies to these assertions.

"1635. Item, They [*i. e.* the twelve men of the jury of the Court Leet] present the Constables and Churchwardens of this

* Blount's M.S. Notes.

Borough to have incurred the payne of xs. for not having a sufficient Chafnet according to the Statute in that case provided, and it is ordered that a sufficient Chafnet be provided by the Constables and the Churchwardens before the Feast of St. Michaell the Archangell next, and that the Inhabitants of this Borough shall be assessed towards the making thereof, and such as shall refuse to pay the somes on them assessed shall be distrayned by their goodes and chattells for the same."

"1556. Alsoe they present the Churchwardens of this Towne to have incurred the penalty of the Statute in that case made and provided for not keepinge of such netts as whereby crowes and such other vermine might be destroyed, which devoure and spoyle corne to the greate prejudice of many of the Inhabitants within the Borough."*

"Item, They present that the persons under namyd have severallie incurred the payne of xiid., for that they have permitted there dogges, mastyves, to goe and followe them unmosled to the Churche uppon the Soundays and holidaies, contrary to the order taken in Courte. And also for they have suffered them to goe abrod in the stretes by nyght or by day unmosled, and it is comanded to them not to suffer there said mastyves dogges, to come or followe them to Church uppon pain to forfeit 6s. 4d." [Here follow the names of eleven persons who had incurred this forfeit.]

"1573. Twelve persons were presented for wearing their hats in Church on Sunday, 22nd of November.†

* See Statutes, anno 24 Henry VIII., c. x.

† In the Bailiff's Accounts for 1568 several persons were fined for wearing Caps beyond their station in life. They paid the penalty of a breach of a Proclamation, lately issued by the Queen for sumptuary purposes. "That no serving man, nor other yeoman taking wages, nor such other as may not dispend of freehold 40 shillings per year, shall wear any shurt or shurtband, under or upper cappe, bonet or hatte garnished, mixt, made or wrought with silke, gold or silver, nor shall weare any bonet or shirtband made out of the Realme of England or Wales."—A Proclamation for apparel published 13th of May, 1565. See appendix to Strype's Annals, vol. i, p. 76.

These items occur in the Churchwardens' Accounts:

1615. Paid to John Exley, for boordes and nailes for the windows of the back side the Church to keep out the pigeons .. .. .. iijs. iiijd.

1624. Item. Paid to Tho. Howton for swepinge off the spiders .. .. iijs. iiijd.

Paid more for correctinge of the dogges in the Church .. .. iijs. iiijd.

1668. Item, John Botley for naylinge up lathes and boordes in the windowes next the Priorie to keepe out the piggions .. .. .. vid.

The Church, however, both in its exterior and interior was greatly changed by a wild and overwhelming fire, which broke out on Monday, March 18th, 1699. Commencing in the roof it destroyed the fine old wrought ceilings, and completely gutted the fabric. The antient Church Plate, Registers, and Bells were all saved with difficulty, and the brooch or wooden steeple which then surmounted the Tower was burnt, and has never been replaced. The Inhabitants came forward with a noble liberality, and by the various methods of a church rate, subscriptions,* and loans, secured at an ultimate cost of £16,500

* "A Parish Booke for entering the names and sums of money of all such persons as do contribute any towards the rebuilding of the said Parish Church of Leominster, anno Dom. 1700.

SUBSCRIBERS.

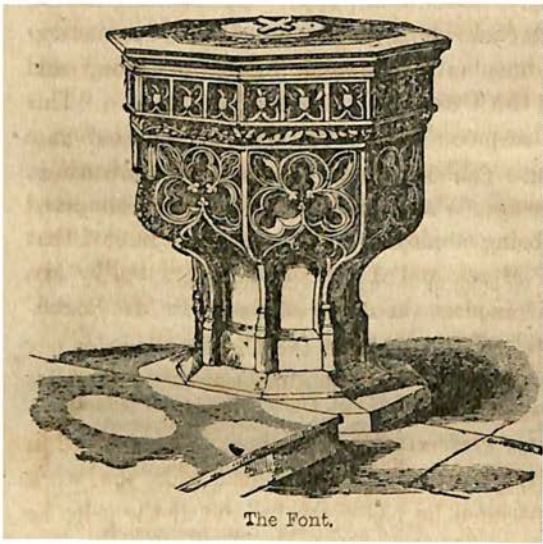
Gilbert Lord Bishop, thirty pounds.
The Right Hon. the Lord Coningsby, two hundred pounds.
Deane Tyler, three guineas.
Cannon Watton, three guineas.
Cannon Rogers, three guineas
Cannon Walson, three guineas.
Dr. Oakley, five guineas.
Mr. Michael Stephens, (then Vicar) six guineas.
Archdeacon Fox, three guineas.
Henry Gorges, Esq., twenty pounds.
Madam Brabazon, ten pounds.
Chancellor Baldwyne, twenty guineas.
The Lady Baldwyne, five guineas.
Tho. Harley, Esq., ffive pounds.
Hen. Cornwall, Esq., tenn pounds.
J. Price, Esq., in timber five pounds.
Sir Herbert Croft, seven pounds.
Sir John Williams, tenn pounds.
Ferdinando Gorges, Esq., five pounds.
Sir Ffran. Charlton, ffive pounds.
Edwd. Harley, Esq., forty pounds.
Tho. Ffoley, Esq., tenn pounds.
Robt. Price, Esq., ffive pounds.
Robt. Dobbins, one guinea.
Jno. Birch, Esq., five pounds.
Chas. Cornwall, Esq., ten pounds.
Jno. Salway, Esq., five pounds.
Hum. Mayo, Esq., two pounds.
Ric. Barnaby, Esq., two guineas.
Tho. Tompkins, Esq., two guineas.
Robt. Unett, Esq., one guinea.
Dr. Brewster, one ginny.
Jam. Morgan, Esq., two guineas.
Mr. Alban Thomas, one ginny.
Fran. Bridges, Esq., one ginny.
Jno. Twist, Esq., one ginny.
Dr. Williams, one ginny.
Mr. James Caswell, one guinea.
Mr. Radifrom, one guinea.
Mr. Sloane, one guinea.

the Restoration of their Church.* The Church was re-opened for Divine Worship on Whit-Sunday, May 26, 1705; and the first sermon preached was a funeral sermon for Mr. Thos. Gittoes.

The length of the present Church as restored is 125 feet; the breadth 124 feet; and the height 52 feet.

The West Gallery was first erected for the accommodation of the scholars of the new Charity or Free School in 1722, and was enlarged for the reception of the organ in 1737. The South Gallery was erected as late as 1840; at which time the organ was placed at the East end of the Chancel, and the seats of the Mayor and Corporation were changed to their present arrangement.

These alterations were made amidst the loudly expressed regrets of many of the Inhabitants at an outlay of £960, a sum amply sufficient to have re-seated the interior of the Church in a creditable and church-like fashion.



The Font.

The Font.—The Font was presented in 1842, by the Rev. W. Evans, then Rural Dean of Leominster, and lately appointed a

* The original estimate was £14,500. This was a large sum, but the work of reconstruction seems to have been left to an irresponsible Committee of the tradesmen engaged in the rebuilding it, and hence this large outlay. The Representatives of the Borough advanced a part of this money. Three cancelled bonds are still preserved in the Parish chest. They are endorsed, "The bonds to the Rt. Hon. Thos. Lord Conyngsby and to E. Harley, Esq., from the Men of Leominster" for £250. Divine service was held during the rebuilding of the Church in the Schools or Court-house or Abp. Pecham's Chapel in the Forbury.

Canon of Hereford Cathedral. It is a copy, (by hands scarcely equal to its due execution) of the Font of St. Mary Magdalene in Oxford. It has around its margin a Latin inscription: "Deo et Eccles. Gulielmus Edvardus Evans de Burton Court, et Ruralis Decanus de Leom. d. d. 1843;" and this Greek Anagram:

Νίψὸν ἀνόμημα μὴ μόναν ὄψιν,

a sentence that reads alike whichever end it is commenced, and of which this is a free translation:

Wash not alone thy visage clean,
But wash away the stain within.

THE REREDOS.—The Reredos exhibits a picture on canvass, an indifferent copy of the "Last Supper" by Rubens. Three tablets are placed on each side of the picture: the first containing the Ten Commandments; the second, figures of Moses and Aaron; the third, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. "This adorning of the Altar-piece" was, at the time of its execution, a matter of very grave deliberation in several Parish Meetings. Three limners, Messrs. Wilson, Dillow, and Locke, competed for the honour of being employed. It was finally arranged that the two figures of Moses and Aaron should be painted by Mr. Wilson, and the Altar-piece should be entrusted to Mr. Locke.

"Sept. 4, 1724. Ordered, That the Chamberlain doe pay Mr. Wilson the summe of fforty shillings upon receipt of his two specimens finished."

"Sept. 25, 1724. Ordered, That Mr. Locke be employed in adorning the Altar-piece, and that he shall doe the work agreeable to the specimen he has given in, and at the price he has this day delivered and subscribed to."

[June, 1726. Paid to Mr. John Locke for adorning the Altar-piece .. .. £35.]

The Reredos and Holy Table at this time were placed immediately under the East window. A Screen, the gift of Mrs. Rogers, ran along where the present rails are erected.

"At a Vestry held April 4th, 1734, it was ordered that the

Screen given by Mrs. Rogers be inserted in the Table of Benefactions."*

The communicants assembled in the Chancel during the administration of the Holy Communion.

Within the Rails is a Tablet to the memory of the late Rev. Geo. Woodhouse, for several years Vicar of this Parish; and a monument of some members of the family of Brace of Stagbatch, in this County.

THE CHURCH PLATE.—The Church Plate consists of an antient Paten and Chalice, a silver cup and cover, a silver flagon, and two silver patens.

The following account of the antient Chalice and Paten is given by Mr. Octavius Morgan, M.P., in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries:—

"The Chalice is one of the finest and most perfect I have ever seen. It stands eight and a-half inches high, and is of silver-gilt. The bowl is hemispherical, five and a-half inches in diameter, gilt within and without. Round the exterior is

* These large Tablets, now suspended on the South wall, were made by Mr. Samuel Small. These charges occur in the Churchwarden's accounts for 1732:—

	£	s.	d.
To Mr. John Bach for Canvas for the four frames	1	13	11
Sam. Francis for stitching the Canvas for the frames ..		4	6
Sam. Jauncey for drawing the frames	8	9	0
Sam. Small for the frames	4	0	0
Sam. Johnson, painter	2	7	6

Mr. Small also made the Poor Box and open cupboard near the South Porch. The small door in the Entrance Gates in the South Porch was made, and the large stove in the middle aisle was erected, by an order of Vestry passed Jan. 13th, 1791, "for the purpose of keeping the Church warm." The low doors at the immediate entrance of the South Porch were put up by a Vestry held December 21st, 1797. The King's Arms over the South Entrance were painted by a Mr. Harley Herbert.

	£	s.	d.
1719. Mr. Herbert in pt for drawing the King's Armes ..	2	10	0
Towards the King's Arms	7	0	0

Mr. Herbert was probably a Painter in the Town. This item occurs in the Accounts for 1721.

	£	s.	d.
Pd Mr. Herbert for painting posts and gallery	3	0	0

engraved in antient Church-text letters the following inscription: 'Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo.' The stem is within of silver, overlaid on the outside with gilded open Gothic tracery consisting of six angular miniature buttresses with open arched panelling and tracery between them. The knop is gilded, ornamented with pierced flowing tracery, and has six projecting bosses terminating in lozenge-shaped panels which were enriched with small bores in enamel of the kind "translucid in relief" which prevailed during the fourteenth century, though it continued to be employed much later. Small portions of the dark blue enamel still exist, just sufficient to show what had been, the remainder being worn off by use. The foot which is of silver gilt is hexagonal; the sides of the hexagon being indented and ornamented with an elegant band of small pierced quatrefoils. The sloping sides of the foot are engraved alternately in old Gothic-text characters with the sacred monograms I. H. C. and X. P. C., (signifying Jesus Christ.) It will, however, be seen that one of these sides has been cut out and clumsily replaced by another plate of silver gilt of more modern make and inferior workmanship. The cause of this is easily accounted for. On one side of the foot of the Chalice was usually engraved a figure of the crucifix which in the celebration of the mass the priest always held towards him. At

The Chalice.

the Reformation, in the year 1552, a commission was issued by Edward VI. to the Marquis of Northampton and others "to visit chapels, churches, fraternities, or gilds, and cause to be taken due inventories of their plate, jewels, &c., leaving nevertheless in every parish church or chapel one or more chalices, according to the multitude of the people." It seems therefore very probable that this chalice, being of large and convenient size for the administration of the sacrament according to the Protestant ritual was, according to the foregoing instructions, either left with or given to the Parish Church; but that as the engraving of the crucifix on the foot might be supposed to lead to a superstitious reverence of it, all crucifixes at that time being removed, that portion of the foot was cut away and replaced by the plate engraved with the monogram I.H.C. as we now see it. The Gothic tracery with which the stem is ornamented is, architecturally speaking, of Decorated character, and the enamelling might also be of the Decorated period, but the band of quatrefoils round the foot is of rather a later character, and I am therefore on the whole disposed to consider the date of its work early in the fifteenth century.

"The Paten is ancient, but of ruder work, and hardly seems to have belonged to it;* its style of ornament being different, though they may have been always used together. It is six inches in diameter; and is sunk in the middle with a six foiled depression, having the face of the Saviour, surrounded by a nimbus, coarsely engraved in the centre; in the squandrils of the six foils are similarly engraved roses, alternating with what may be a rude representation of acorns and oak leaves, whilst round the edge is a double row of zig-zag engraving.

* The Paten is evidently a cover of the chalice, as was the custom of that early period. See on this subject Gough's Sepulchral Remains, vol. I. p. i, p. 70. It is worthy of mention that the Inventories both before and after the fire of 1699 contain this item :—

"Item, three pieces of silver from off the Chalice."

It is probable that these pieces of silver, so long preserved with care, were parts of the crucifix, which had been cut off and removed from the stand of the chalice. They are now unfortunately lost.

"There is no hall-mark on either Chalice or Paten, a circumstance not uncommon in early Church plate. The precise year of their make therefore cannot be determined, nor can it be pronounced whether they are of English workmanship,* though it is very probable."†

The silver Chalice and Cover‡ is also antient. It is mentioned in an inventory§ of Church goods as early as A.D. 1619. There is a tradition that it was given by Sir Thomas Conyngsby.

* The Author believes that these antient vessels were of foreign workmanship, and probably from the Low Countries. He has shown them to several eminent Jewellers, on whose authority he ventures to differ from this opinion of Mr. Morgan.

† Archæologia, Vol. XXXV., p. 489.

‡ "Goldsmiths' Hall, London, E.C., Jan. 7, 1862.

Dear Sir,—The Cover which you have submitted for the inspection of the Goldsmiths' Company was made in the year 1576. Of this there is no doubt. We cannot find out the name of the maker. I suppose you are aware that this Cover was also used as a Paten. It was made for that purpose, as well as for a Cover to the Cup. I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

"The Rev. G. F. TOWNSEND. WALTER PRIDEAUX."

§ A copy of this old inventory, A.D. 1619, may be an interesting document.

Imp^s, on silver challice guilt w^th a cover.
It^m, on silver cup with a cover.
It^m, on pales-cloth and pulpit-cloth of silke, and a long quishinge for the Preacheres.
It^m, two holland sirplishes, on old Bible, on nue Bible of the last translation, and the Paraphras of Erasmus.
It^m, on Booke called Jewell's works.
It^m, on Comunion Booke, twoe old bookes, and on old Psalter, w^th the book the Clarke useth.
It^m, two Register bookes, the on of parchment, the other of papr.
It^m, on homolie booke.
It^m, 2 table-clothes and 4^er towells, and a littell carpet.
It^m, vi formes, and on ladder.
It^m, iij nue towells of Holland, containynge xiii^en yards and a halfe.
It^m, 4 Prayer bookes.
It^m, vii^en singinge bookes.
It^m, on table cloth w^h Mrs. Kempe gave by her last will and testament.
It^m, twoe poyses of lead for the organes.
It^m, on brazen candlestick.
It^m, on little Sancte bell.

[This was called in later accounts by a much more irreverent name:
1738. P^d. John Coldicott for mending the Ting Tang .. .. .. 6s.]

The silver Flagon was the gift of Mrs. Ann Osborne. This payment occurs in the Churchwardens' Accounts for 1722:

Gave to Madame Osborne's maid for bringing the plate 10s. 6d.

One silver Paten was given by Mrs. Hester Clarke, 1733; and the other by Mrs. Susannah Price, 1741.

1742. Pd ffor engraveing Mrs. Price's name on the piece of plate she gave to the Altar .. .. .. 3s. 6d.

The silver-gilt Alms Dish was purchased by the Churchwardens A.D. 1858.

THE ORGAN.—The Organ was purchased and put up in the west gallery in 1737. There is no record of its maker, nor of its price. It was largely repaired and improved at the cost of £95 in the year 1797, by the Messrs. Avery, organ-builders, London. It was removed to its present inappropriate position in 1841-2.*

LIST OF ORGANISTS.

Mr. Paul Francillon .. 1737.	Mr. James Peene .. 1775.
Mr. Broderip .. .. 1766.	Mr. Adam Rea .. .. 1811.
Mr. Griffith Cheese .. 1772.	Mr. Geo. Barnes .. 1824.

THE BELLS.—The Bells were originally six in number. They were with difficulty saved in the fire of 1699, and on the

Itm, 3 *pieces of silver from off the guilt Challice.*
Itm, on flagon pott of pewter.
Itm, on bage of lynon to carry the plate in.
Itm, ij quishines.
Itm, on payer of organs, and on old organ case.
Itm, on ye ladder contayning about 26 feet, wh John Steward of Cholstrea gave to the Church.
Itm, certaine peeces of old tymbre in the old bell-house.

* This singular petition in reference to the Organ in the antient Church is yet found among the Records of the Corporation. It is about the date of 1666.

"To the King's most excellent Matie, and to the Right Honourable the Lords Spirituall and Temporall, and to the Comons assembled in the High Court of Parliament.

"In most humble wise complayneing, beseech yor Highnes, yor faithfull, loyall, and obedient subjects, the Bergesses, Inhitants, and Parishioners of the Borough and Parish of Leomynster, in the County of Hereford.

restoration of the Church were reset, with all the improvements then recently introduced.

This curious collection of rhymes was written on the south arch of the western tower, and was copied by Mr. Henry Gamble, previous to the removal of the Belfry to the next higher story, A.D. 1852-3.

"If you'll give eare, then you shall heare
Of ringing in commendation;
Of our bonney bells with their shuger'd knells,
Which are held in admiration.
Our ancestors in ringing took this order,
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, they never sought no further.
To rays, to fall, to close withal,
It was their whole intention;
Nothing did change, they thought it strange,
They knew no such invention.
But as in trades and arts new things are daily learned,
Those noble spirited hearts their ringing have decerned.
Such pretty parts, such setts, such tunes,
And such several notes of change!
—in his place,
From music he is estranged.
The pleasant hills and dales, the mounts, the moors, the meadows,
Attend unto our tales the groves and dainty shadows.

Whereas Wallop Brabazon, Esquier, dwelling within the said Parish, by vertue of an act about five years past made by Sir Nathaineell Brent, then Vicar generall, without the consent of the Inhitants of the said Parish for allowing £x p^r annum to an organist for playing upon the organs in the said Parish Church of Leomynster aforesaid, hath and doth threaten the Churchwardens of the said Parish to have them convened in the High Comission Court, yf they shall refuse to make payment of the said some of £x to the said organist according to the said Act, which organist he the said Mr. Brabazon maintayneth in his house. May it please yo^r Highnes of yo^r clemencie and gracious disposicon to graunt that it mai be enacted that the said Act for the organist may be utterly repealed and made voide.

"And we yo^r Ma^tie's loyall and obedyent subjects in all bounden dutie shall pray for yo^r sacred Ma^tie's long and prosperous reigne over us, and for ye prosperous contynuance and success of this yo^r Ma^tie's royall Parliament, and the hapynes of the Lords and Comons therein assembled."

The evening's rill deplores them still, both late and early;
Peace, boys, and speak not a word! let us hear our bells go clearly.
Each one doth attend, they doe us commend,
And think it so very strange,
When ye they heare our bells strike so cleare,
And at every pull a change.
Churchwardens, we you pray, keep these our bells in order,
And careful always be our music still to further.
So newly strung, with cottrell fast and cotter,
Let beme and wheele be joyn'd well, that we have no totter.

THOMAS SAWIN, Master of this Company.
SIMON COLDICOTT.
WILLIAM BALDWIN.
THOMAS GILBERT.
ROGER SPENCER.
IOSEPH PATISHALL.
FRANCIS IONES.
ROBERT NOTT."*

* This inscription has been submitted to the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, Rector of Clyst St. George, Devon, the most learned Campanologist in England, and the Author of a book, entitled "Practical remarks on Belfries and Ringers," which should be in the hands of every Clergyman and Churchwarden. He speaks in the highest terms of the exceeding skilfulness and evident delight in their art shown by this little band of Leominster bell-ringers.

"Your Ringers," he says, "had certainly made great proficiency in the art, for they could change at every stroke, which is more than yet has been learnt in Devon. I have no doubt of the date of this inscription being 1705, or 1706; just before which time a new mode of bell-ringing was introduced, which could not have been effected with bells hung before that date. You ask the meaning of the words 'cottrels' and 'cotters' in the inscription. The first were wedges or keys: the second, washers used with the other. I have heard them also called 'gibbs and cotters.' You also wish me to explain 'at every pull a change.' This is the proof that your Ringers had learnt the art; and this movement is most difficult of accomplishment. Changes are still rung no doubt, but it is the same change for many rounds, and from figures chalked up; whereas the science is 'to change at every pull,' and that without note or chalk mark.

To ring a complete change, with tenor as a cover,—
On 6 bells will take 5 minutes or 120 changes.
8 " 3½ hours or 5010 "

P.S. There should always be two or three more Ringers than Bells. I ring here regularly, and sometimes chime my people to Church on Sundays. I rung out and in the Old and New year at midnight with my little band of six: pretty well for a 'youth' just 72; thankful, I hope, for the health and strength I have, and that my life is spared."

There is external testimony to the date of the inscription, as the Parish

These bells were recast, and increased from six to eight A.D. 1756, by a Mr. Wm. Evans of Chepstow, at the cost of £216 16s. They bear no inscription beyond the names of the Parish officers for the time being; and one of them rings out "Prosperity to the Church of England." The weight of the Tenor Bell is 25 cwt., and the key note is E flat. It is four feet across the sound bow.

There was another competitor for the honour of recasting these bells, Mr. Abel Rudhall of Gloucester, a bell-founder of considerable fame and experience in these districts. He did not think himself very well used on the occasion. The following letter relates to this subject:

"To the Rev. Mr. Henry Vaughan.

"Rev. Sir,—On ye first of Nov. last I wrote to you, desiring if you pleas'd to remit what your gentlemen thought proper for my trouble & charges on account of your Bells. The Bearer is my servant; so if you please to let him bring what y^r^ gentlemen of their honour think fit I shall be obliged to you and them. I somehow got a disorder upon me that journey which I am not well of yet. I got on horseback ye next week, and have not been able to ride since that time, which I dare say is not so little loss as fifty pounds to me.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

Gloucester, 14th Feb., 1756. ABEL RUDHALL.

P.S.—Be pleas'd to dispatch my servant as soon as you can."

This letter bears this endorsement on the back:

"Feb. 16, 1756. Received of Mr. Somerset Watts, the sum of two pounds, two shillings, by order of the Committee as a full discharge for expences and loss of time of Mr. Abel Ruddhall, for his attendance at Leominster, in order to contract for the casting of their bells. As per me, HEN. BAKER.

Witness, THOMAS JENNINGS."

Registers of Burial for 1708 record the death of two of this little company of Ringers, viz., Francis Jones and Simon Coldicott. Peace to their ashes! They were animated with a cheerly spirit, hearty zeal, and enthusiastic fondness for their art, as they rang out from their newly raised belfry their shugared knells. Let us indulge the hope that their hearts were lighted up with the flame of a true devotion.

These bells are reported to have been conveyed to Chepstow by the waters of the Lug and of the Wye. The following receipt is still extant in the Parish chest:

"Received March 3rd, 1756, of Mr. Somersett Watts, fifteen pounds, one shilling, for freight, journeys to Chepstow to weigh, and other trouble with the bells belonging to Leominster, pursuant to agreement with Mr. Watts, per ROBT. PENNIE."

THE CHIMES.—There are a set of Chimes attached to these bells. These chimes existed before the fire of 1699. On the restoration of the Church the chime-work was repaired and renewed by a Mr. John Stainsbury, an ingenious workman and clever watchmaker in the Town. His bond relating to the work and dated A.D. 1710, is yet extant.

"Whereas the above bounden John Stansbury did lately undertake the repairinge of some parte, and the making new of some other parte of the ironwork, of or belonging to the Church now being, and ffixed in the steeple of the Parish Church of Leominster aforesaid, that was necessary to putt in order before the s[d] chime-worke would move according to art, and in consideration of the summe of ffive pounds to him now paid by the s[d] William Spencer hath workemanlike performed the said worke to the satisfaction of competent judges,"—and then it goes on to recite that Mr. Stainsbury shall bind himself "for the sum of five pounds additional to keep during seven years in good repaire and order the ironworke belonging to the said chimes by him as aforesaid repaired and made new, (which iron work is particularly menconed in a Scedule hereunto annexed,) soe as the regular mocon of the said chime-worke might not be hindred any three days together by any neglect of the said John Stansbury."

"A true and perfect schedule of the ironworke repaired and made new by the within bounden John Stansbury, and belonging to the chimes menconed in the bond whereunto this schedule is attached, and is as follows, viz.:

Two large iron wheeles to govern the motion of the barrell.

Two large iron pinnions or nutts.

Iron staples, hooks and rodde, to lock down the lashes.
Several new studds and keys."

The machinery for effecting the action of the chimes is very simple: and is probably a part of the original machinery. The hammers that strike the bells are made to perform their office by a cylindrical barrel furnished with pegs, which cause them to rise or fall, and which is itself put in motion by heavy weights. The present barrel was given by Mr. Henry Gatehouse about 1780. The chimes were constructed to play every four hours during the day and night. These two tunes were adapted to the barrel; "My lodging is on the cold ground," and on Sundays the "149th Psalm." The chimes, which had rung out for three or four centuries, have during the last two years played very interruptedly, and since the commencement of the present year, 1861, have altogether ceased!

THE AVENUES.—The Avenues in the Church-yard are greatly admired.

In 1724, the first avenue was planted, extending from the entrance in Church Street to the South Porch.*

1725. To John Williams for watering trees several times 1s. 6d.
1727. To Edward Watkins for bushing the trees and staking them .. .. 6s. 6d.
1730. To John Watchman for cutting the trees 14s. 0d.

[This is the first charge for "cutting the trees," an item contained in every yearly account from this date.]

In 1752, the avenue of yew trees was planted between the South Porch and the entrance to the Grange, at the sole cost of Mr. Isaac Whittington.

"At a Vestry held Jan. 2, 1752, it is agreed that Mr. Seward return the thanks of the Parishioners for Mr. Whittington's gift of the yew trees; and for the cost he has been at in giving this ornament to the Churchyard."

* This first avenue of trees was originally much longer than at present. It extended in a single row throughout Church Street, as far as the site of old Frere Chamber gate, and along the whole south side of the Church. The trees were cut down, because they were supposed to darken the Church and houses to which they were contiguous.

In 1778, the avenue extending from the main entrance in South Street to the West door was planted.

	£	s.	d.
1778, July 16. To halling the trees to the Church		6	6
To thorns and stakes for the trees		8	0
To John Pritchard for setting the trees ..	1	13	0
To the trees	2	16	0

In 1794, at a Vestry Meeting held Feb. 15, it was ordered that a double row of elm trees be planted on the walk leading from the Church gates to the Grange gates.

This order was never carried out, but in its stead the present row of beautiful limes was planted in 1795, under the superintendence of Mr. William Bedford, then Churchwarden, the father of James Bedford, Esq., the much respected Magistrate for the Borough.

THE GATES.—The first iron Gates were erected at the entrance in Church Street A.D. 1721, at the cost of £10 7s. 6d.

"April 17th, 1721. Ordered that the Schallenge be pulled down, and ye covering over them; and that a handsome pair of gates be put in the place thereof;* and that a Charnel-house be erected at the east end of the Church, and as much of the timber that was in the Schallenge be put therein as is usefull."

The present gates in Church Street were erected by Messrs. Waring and Stone, in compliance with an order of Vestry, Feb. 28th, 1788.

	£	s.	d.
1788. Aug. 5. Paid carriage of gates and collars from Stourport	2	5	7
1792. Paid Messrs. Waring for gates	31	10	6

The present gate and stone steps leading from the Churchyard to the Priory were ordered by a Vestry on Jan 21, 1790. The iron gates, at the end of the walk leading to the Grange were erected by an order of Vestry on Jan. 13, 1791.

THE REGISTERS.—The Registers commence A.D. 1549. They are missing from 1604 to 1669. They contain scarcely anything

* See p. 183 of this History.

worthy of mention. In the month of July, 1577; the burial of Sir Robert Bell, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, who died suddenly at Leominster while travelling the Oxford Circuit, is thus recorded: "Dn̄us Bell Capital. Baron Saccharii Angliæ sep. fuit xxv^to die."

The Registers from 1713 to 1725 throw light upon a custom now obsolete, but which accounts for the notion commonly prevalent that it is imperative to bury in woollen. An Act was passed 30 Charles II., Stat. I., c. 3, 1678, for the encouragement of the woollen trades, in which it was enacted that no corpse should be buried in any shirt, shift, sheet, or shroud, or anything whatsoever made or mingled with flax; or in silk, hair, gold silver, or in any stuff or thing other than what is made of sheep's wool only, on pain of penalties. The Act orders that a certificate to the observance of this Act be sworn to by two witnesses of each burial before a Magistrate, and such certificate to be presented to the Clergyman officiating within eight days after death.

The Register of Burials at this period is formed according to the requirements of this Act.

Burial.	Burials from March ye 25th, 1713, to March 25, 1714.	When certifyed for yt they were buried in woollen.
Joyce,	The wife of Laurence Meredith was buried March 31st.	April 6th.

The Act was unpopular. Four exceptions are recorded in one year, 1713-14. The entry of these is thus recorded:

Rachel,	Daughter of Elizabeth Hammonds, wid. was bur^d June 30.	No affidavit made, and notice given of it to the Officers July ye 9th.

or thus:—

Mary,	Wife of Mr. Thomas Harris, attorney, was bur^d Sept. 19th.	Bur^d in linen, and information made before Mr. Cowell, and ye money paid to the Overseers of the poor.

The penalties incurred under this Act were paid to the Overseers, and by them given to the poor.

"August 5, 1691. Rec^d of William Baldwyn, jun., the sum of 50s. forfeited upon ye Act for burying in woollen, and distributed to the poor as followeth:

To Richard Wontner 10s.	To Barbara Howdle .. 10s.
" William Dugan .. 10s.	" Anne Edwards .. 10s.
" John Griffiths .. 10s.	

RICHARD HODGES, Churchwarden."

The poet Pope, in a well known passage, makes one of the Beauties of his day express her dislike of this custom:

" 'Odious! in woollen: 'twould a saint provoke!'
Were the last words the fair Narcissa spoke:
'No! let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold hands and shade my lifeless face.' "

A large bundle of the certificates required by these Burial Acts is collected in the Vestry chest. Some are written, but many are printed forms, and are adorned with the most woeful funereal emblems. The last of these certificates is given at the burial of a Vicar, the Rev. H. Vaughan, A.D. 1762.*

These Statutes fell into disuse, and were repealed in the 54th of George III., c. 108, A.D. 1814.

CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS.—Some few extracts from the Churchwardens' Accounts may be interesting.

1719. Gave to persons by ye consent of ye Township y^t^ had had great loss by hail in Staffordshire .. .. .. 3s.

For horse hire for me and my sidesman to Hereford .. 3s.

" At a Parish Meeting held this seventh day of October, 1721, it is agreed, that fifteen pounds be allowed to Mr. Jervis, Vicar of this Church, towards the maintenance of a Curate, to be paid by the Churchwardens out of the lewn."

[This grant was confirmed and renewed on many subsequent occasions.]

" March 25, 1729. Ordered, That ye Churchwardens provide

* " Borough of Leominster.—I, Elizabeth Hare of the sd Borough, Wido, do make oath that the Rev. Henry Vaughan, lately deceased, was not wrapt, wound up, or buried in Linnen, but only in Woollen, pursuant to the Statute in that case made and provided. Dated April 2d, 1762. ELIZA HARE.

" I do hereby certify that the person above-mentioned did make affidavit before me, JAMES HODGSON, Rector of Humber.

for Philip Grub, Clerk of the Parish, a gown proper or his habit, when he officiates in the desk against Easter Sunday next, and at the same time provide a hood for ye Vicar according to his degree."

These charges occur in the Churchwardens' Accounts :—

	£	s.	d.
Pd to Mr. Seward for the Clark's gown	2	12	0
Pd ffor 4 doz. and 9 loopes for ye gown	1	9	6
Pd to Mark Ward for making the gown		10	0
Pd for the Rev. Mr. Vaughan's hood	1	16	10
1736. For expenses of me and my horse to Knighton, being out two days and one night		5	0
Paid for 25 urchins*		8	4
" four foxes		4	0
" Bottle of wine for Holy Com.		2	0
1740. Gave 12 poor people (being slaves that came from Algiers) by a pass signed by a Justice ..		3	0

1742. John Grubb chosen Sexton on condition that he allows £8 yearly out of the profits of the Sexton's place to the organist, to be paid quarterly. [This was remitted to Grubb in 1758.]

Jan. 2, 1752. Ordered that a bronze Sconce be placed in the middle aisle by the Churchwardens.

[This Sconce consisted of 24 branches, and was suspended from the ceiling with a scroll of ornamental iron work. Its cost was £10 18s. 6d.]

	£	s.	d.
1777. To Wm. Baldwyn for ringing the Bell ..	1	1	0

[This was the Curfew Bell which only ceased with the cessation of Church Rates, A.D. 1855.]

	s.	d.
Easter Sunday breakfasts	10	0

[This was an annual charge, and a few years later reached a much larger sum.]

BENEFACTIONS.—The following list of Benefactions is taken from the Charity Commissioners' Report.

* This payment of 4d. a head for urchins or hedgehogs continued till 1824. The larger payment of 1s. a head for the destruction of foxes ceased about 1780.

List of Benefactions existing in the Town and Parish of Leominster.

Name of Charity.	Amount of. £ s. d.	Object of.	Time of payment.	Mode of payment.	Date of.	Present Trustees of.	Secured on what.	Paid by whom.
Heynes' gift	6 8	Sermon	St. John's day		1605		Haine's Plock	Executors of T. W. Davies
	10 0	To poor	Good Friday	In bread				
Slowman's gift	10 0	Sermon	Sunday before St. Peter's day		1637		Tanyard Meadow	T. Burlton, Esq.
	10 0	To poor		In bread		Churchwardens		Ditto
Meyricke's	2 0 0	Poor widows	Christmas	In bread	1664	Vicar & Churchwardens	Poplar's Meadow	Lord Rodney
Philip Powle	2 12 0	Six sermons	New year's day, Easter, Whit-Sunday, Christmas, 5 & 17 November		1640	Mayor and Corporation	Corporation revenue	Chamberlain of Borough
	8 0 0	To poor	Easter & Christmas	In bread	1640	Mayor and Corporation	Ditto	Chamberlain of Borough
Rowland Powle	4 16 0	To poor	Easter & Christmas	In bread	1644	Mayor and Corporation	Land	Chamberlain
Henry Brown	1 0 0	To poor	Easter & Christmas	Money	1719	Mayor and Corporation	Funds	Chamberlain
James Clark's charity	2 12 0	12 penny loaves	Every Sunday		1735	Vicar & Churchwardens	Land	Sir Edw. Colt and others
Gittoes' gift	1 0 0	20 poor widows	St. Thomas's day	Money	1763	Overseers of poor	Goodman Plock	Mr. Charles Turner
Richard Gwillym's charity	1 0 0	To Vicar for a sermon	This is refused on the ground that the land cannot be identified*		1766	T. Brayen, Esq.	Land near Broadward, and tenement	T. Brayen, Esq.
	1 0 0	To poor of Leominster				Ditto	Ditto	T. Brayen, Esq.
	1 0 0	Poor of Ludlow				Ditto	Ditto	Mr. Baker
Bangham's charity	1 0 0	To 10 poor widows	On Saturday before Mid-Lent Sunday	Bread or money		Vicar & Churchwardens	The old Waterloo Hotel	Mr. Bannister

* This land is thus described in the Report of the Charity Commissioners, p. 230:—"A piece of meadow or pasture ground, called The Purchase, situate near to Broadward's Causeway, containing by estimation about two acres; and also a messuage, then divided into two separate buildings situate in Draper's Lane, then in the occupation of Thomas Coates and John Harris, having the said Drapers' Lane on the East, &c."

List of Benefactions existing in the Town and Parish of Leominster.

Name of Charity.	Amount of. £	s.	d.	Object of.	Time of payment.	Mode of payment.	Date of.	Present Trustees of.	Secured on what.	Paid by whom.
Heming's charity	6	6	0	To poor widows	Christmas & Easter	8d. loaves	1814	Vicar	Cowey Field	R. Lane, Esq.
Cornwall's charity	450	0	0	To poor women, chiefly members of Clothing Society	Christmas and New Year's eve	Interest in sums of 4s. 6d. & 2s. each	1835	Vicar, Mayor, Messrs. E. P. Southall, J. T. Southall, Jos. Newman, E. Lloyd, T. B. Stallard	Consols	E. P. Southall, Treasurer
Marlowe's charity				To members of Baptist Congregation			1773		Rent of Houses & Consols	Four trustees appointed by deed
		13	10	Poor of Borough		Money		Overseers		
		13	10	To outpoor						
		13	10	To Baptist poor				The Baptist Minister		
	2	1	8	Educating some poor children						
Tyler's charity	1	10	0	Poor of Church of England	New Year's day	1s. to each	1728	Overseers of poor	Old Plock Meadow	E. Manwaring
	1	10	0	Poor of Burgess Street Meeting House	St. Andrew's day	Ditto		Minister of Chapel		
	2	10	0	Minister of Burgess St. Meeting House						
Hester Clark's charity	20	0	0	To 4 poor widows in Almshouses	Half-yearly		1736	T. Brayen, Esq.	Consols	T. Brayen, Esq.
Powell's charity	4	0	0	Half to Minister and half to poor of Baptist Congregation	When most wanted		1712	Minister for time being	Land	Minister for time being
Wyke's charity	20	0	0	A fund to be applied to repairs of Baptist Chapel	When required		about 1800	Minister and officers	Consols	Trustees

List of lost Benefactions formerly existing in the Town and Parish of Leominster.

Name of Charity.	Amount of.	Object of.	Date of.	Date of loss.	What property consisted of.	The names of trustees.
Bishop Scory's charity	£200 0 0	£100 to two clothiers, £50 to each for 7 years: £100, £5 to 20 artificers	1565	£100 was lent to found a House of Industry, 1748, not repaid; other £100 lost by insolvency of the borrowers	Money	Bailiff & Burgesses
Philip Powle	50 0 0	To be lent to 5 young tradesmen	1640	No trace of it to be found	Money	Bailiff & Burgesses
Walwyn's gift	20 0 0	£1 yearly to poor of the church	1739	Lost by the insolvency of the Solicitor to the estate	Money	Bailiff & Burgesses
Toldervy's charity	100 0 0	To lend on trust to four tradesmen	1789	Not exactly known	Money	Bailiff & Burgesses
	1 0 0	To poor of Moravian chapel			Land at the "Hill" in the Parish*	Bailiff & Burgesses
	4 0 0	To poor of Leominster		1813		
Woodhouse's charity	5 0 0	To poor of Leominster on 17th of July, "in memory of my wedding day"	1745	1816, by Mr. West, the then proprietor, refusing to pay, and pleading the Statute of Mortmain	Charge on land at Little Froom	
Charles Turberville	20 0 0	Interest of to poor	1646	Not known	£20 stock	
Wallop Brabazon	5 0 0	Ditto	Not known	About 1780	£5 „	Churchwardens of out Parish
William Birch	10 0 0	Ditto	Not known	Not known	£10 „	
Thomas Hardwick	1 0 0	To poor	1693	Not known	Dishley plock	Not known

* "The rent-charge was paid until 1813, when the property was sold to Mr. Burlton, who refused to pay the charge. It has been intimated to the Corporation that they ought to make good the sum of £100 for this charity." Extract from the Charity Commissioners' Report, p. 237.

BRIEFS.—Among the documents in the Parish Chest is a curious list of about 350 Briefs for which Collections were made in the Parish Church between the years 1707 and 1752. They amount generally to about ten in the year, and vary in their proceeds from £10 to less than 10s. It was evidently the custom for Commissioners or Collectors to itinerate the country, and to collect the sums resulting from these Briefs. Their very frequency however worked out its own remedy, as the collections gradually diminished to the small sums enumerated in this, one of the last printed "Brief Receipts" preserved in the Church Chest.

May 5th, 1752. Received of the Minister and Churchwardens of Leominster.

	£	s.	d.
For Stamford Bridge, Fire Brief, the sum of ..		9	10
Upton upon Severn Church		4	11
Knighton Church		6	6
Shipston Church		4	11
Nether Seale Church		7	9
W. SCOTT.	1	13	11

THE VICARAGE.—The Vicarage House has ever stood on its present site, in close proximity to the Church. The first direct mention of it occurs in a Bailiff's account for 1584.

1584. Item—P^d^ the 11th daye of July for a gallon of sack and clarett wyne, and one pound of sugar which was bestowed upon Mr. Conyngsbye at the Vickarege at the appointment of Mr. Ewen, as then being Mr. Bayliff's deputy .. .. vs.

The Vicar, anterior to the Reformation, was appointed by the Prior: he is now nominated by the Lord Chancellor, as the Representative of the Crown.

These few names only occur of the Vicars before the Reformation:—

William Salisbury	1385	John Scott	1466
Reginald Pole	1389	Richard Hale	1500
John Virr	1422	Henry———	1533

The following is the list of Vicars since the Reformation:—

Miles Jeffries, 1546.

[Deposed by the Bishop as a Reformer.]

Richard Poull, 1551.

[Appointed as being a Papist; a relative, probably, of Mr. Polle, or Poull, p. 51. He was turned out on the accession of Queen Elizabeth. This last Papist Vicar, according to the ordinary title given to the Clergy of that day, was called "Sir Richard Poull." On his expulsion from the Vicarage he married and lived for some years in the Burgess Street. Testimony to this fact is found in a curious Presentation made in the Court Leet of this Borough A.D. 1568,* and in the survey of the rents made in 1566, his name is thus entered—

The Burgesse Streete, Richard Poule vijs.]

* To the Right Worshipful Mr. Steward, and Mr. Baylyf, of the Borough of Leominster.—In most humble wyse complayninge sheweth unto yor Worshippes, yor dayly orators Thomas Shorter and Walter ap Rece wt the resydewe of the Inhabitants of the Burge Streate wthin the foreseid boroughe, that whereas there is a Well flowinge, and Runnynge before the streete dore of Sr Richard Poull, Clerke, in the aforesaid Burge St., beynge necessary and comodious to the foreseid Inhabytants of the foreseid streete for many kyndes of causes (yf neade shuld require). So yt is righte Worshipfull, that Jane the wief of the seid Sir Richard Poull, being a Rude person of her tongue, and a disquieter of all her neighbours (as it is well knowen) contrary to Righte and Justice, dothe interrupt yr seid orators to fetche any water at the said spring, Revylynge and blasphemynge against those of your seid orators, wh woud have had water there, to the dysturbance of all the strete, sayinge also that she will putt their noses in the springe that will fetch any water there. In consideracon whereof yt may please yor Worshippes to charge the xii. men to be sworne for the Lete or Lawe daye, to view the pmises, that a Redresse may be had therein, whereby yor orators may have no further cause to complayne, and this for Godd's Love.

Yor orators Thomas Shorter, Walter Ap Rece, wth all the Inhabytants of the Burge Strete.

Endorsed—It is ordered and agreed by the twelve men of this law-day, that the Inhabitants of the sayd strete shall edifie, mantayne and repair the well wthin named in the places where in times past hit flowed up, beinge a distance from that place where it flows up nowe, and, that it be repared before the next Law day under the payne of vis. viiid. and so from henceforth to kepe and mayntayne the same from tyme to tyme under the like payne.

John Verre	1558	John Hodges	1568
Thos. Evans	1566	J. Tompkyns	1596

[This last name is omitted in Price's list. There can be no doubt of his appointment. The Parish Register of Burials contains this entry:—

"1601, Maii I. Johanna Tompkyns, Vidua, mater Vicarii hujus Ecclesiæ, sepª fuit."]

John Tombes*	1630	William Whittle ..	1662

[This last was the father of nineteen children by one wife.]

Thomas Wootton ..	1668	Michael Stephens ..	1679
		Launcelot Stephens ..	1714

[A son of the preceding. He accepted a nomination to the Vicarage from Lord Conyngsby, and played him false by resigning, and accepting a nomination from the Crown, which proceeding led to the protracted lawsuit as to the right of presentation to this Vicarage. He was appointed by the Crown, pendente lite, which so angered the Earl of Conyngsby that in the House he attacked the Lord Chancellor Harcourt with great virulence, and was for his libellous language committed to the Tower. See History, p. 166.]

William Jervis, 1720.

[He is omitted in Price's list.]

Henry Vaughan, 1724.

[He was Vicar nearly forty years. During his Incumbency many important improvements were made in the Parish Church. The adorning of the Altar by Mr. Locke in 1725, the augmentation of the Benefice in 1730 by the collection of £400, half paid by the Parishioners, and half by Queen Anne's Bounty; the grants given by the Vestry for the daily reading of the Prayers; the reflooring and levelling of the North Aisle in 1734; the erection of the first Organ after the fire in 1737; the increase and recasting of the Bells in 1756; all these various proceedings speak of a good understanding between himself and his Parishioners, and are memorials of his worth and usefulness. Sir Henry Halford, the favourite physician of Geo. IV., was a descendant of this Mr. Vaughan.]

* See this History, p. 116.

Francis Coleman ..	1796	Charles Escott	1851
William Curtis.. ..	1822	Thomas Westmoreland	1853
George Woodhouse ..	1824	Geo. Fyler Townsend	1857
George Albert Rogers	1847	Augustine G. Edouart	1862

The first record of the value of the Vicarage is found in the Nonæ Rolls,* 1342, 14 and 15 of Edward III. These Rolls were taken to ascertain the ninth of the value of the revenues of the Laity and Clergy, which had been granted to the King for the prosecution of his wars. The return of the Vicarage of Leominster, with the Chapel of Dokkeloe is £14 3s. 4d. This sum is assessed upon the sheaves, fleeces, and lambs of the Parish: and amounted to no more, because the aforesaid Church consists in the church, glebe, that is to say, one messuage with gardens, and cartilage dove-cotes, rents of assize pleas, perquisites, tythes of hay, milk, oblations, obventions, mortuaries, and other small tythes, and on account of the sale of corn at a diminished price, as appears by an Inquisition before the Bishop, &c.

The next return is made by order of Henry VIII., A.D. 1535. The value of the Vicarage is thus returned:—

"The Vicarage of Leominster .. .. £10 3s. 4d."

"Though this Parish" says Blount "be very great, and the Priory was very richly endowed, yet after the Dissolution the Church was left very poor, viz., with only £10 a year stipend for a Vicar, for the very tythes and profits were granted by Queen Elizabeth to John Farnham and his heirs." Patent, 6 Elizabeth.

The two Parishes of Stoke-Prior cum Docklow and Ivington have been formed out of the old Parish of Leominster, the presentations to which are still continued to the Vicar. The first of these was formed into a separate Parish about the middle of the last century. It has a Vicarage House and Schools. There is one curious custom here, unknown elsewhere in England, the payment of a certain measure of corn, called Trug wheat, to the Clergyman. It was originally paid to the Vicar of Leominster for officiating at the Chapels of Ease at Stoke and

* For account of the Nonæ Rolls see Report of Commissioners on Public Records, Appendix, Vol. II., p. 149.

Docklow. It is now transferred to the Incumbent of those Churches.

The second of these, the Township of Ivington, was formed into a separate Parish by an order of Council, dated Jan. 31, 1844.

"The Chapelry district of Ivington is to consist of the western portion of the parish of Leominster, and is bounded on the north by the parish of Kingsland, on the north-west by the parish of Monkland; on the west by the parishes of Stretford and Birley, on the south by the parishes of Hope-under-Dinmore and Croft, on the south-east by the river Lug, and on the east by the remaining part of the parish of Leominster, from which it is divided by proceeding up the river Arrow from its junction with the river Lug, in a north-westerly direction as far as the western extremity of Dry Meadow, in a line with the boundary separating the Ryelands from the Dishley property, and proceeding up such boundary on the western brink of the Ryelands pool in a north-easterly direction, and crossing the road from Leominster to Ivington at Dishley, proceeds in a northernly direction to Baron's Cross turnpike bar, and from thence in a straight line to the Wegnall's Farm, on the river Pinsley, which separates it from Kingsland."

An elegant little Church and a suitable School House have been erected at Ivington, mainly by the exertions and contributions of R. Lane, Esq., of the Ryelands, of the late Mrs. Lane, and of their friends.

The Grammar School.—The Grammar School is a very antient* Institution in the Borough. Prior to the Reformation it was conducted by the Priests serving the three Chauntries in the Parish Church. It was continued in the interval between the Dissolution of the Priory and the Charter of Queen Mary by the public spirit of the Inhabitants, who engaged the services of Edward Allen as the Master of their School. (See p. 54.) The Charter of Queen Mary bestowed on it an endowment of £20

* "Among the donors to the Lady's Chapel in the 14th century is one thus entered, 'Magister Alexander, Rector Scholarum in Leominstre.'"—Blount's MS. Notes.

per annum, to be paid out of the rents of the property then conveyed to the Bailiff and Capital Burgesses by the Crown. This was a considerable sum in those days, and sufficed for the payment of a Schoolmaster and an Usher. These items occur in the Chamberlain's Accounts:—

1554. It^m^ to Mr. Powll for techynge the Schole xv*l.*
It^m^ to Edward Davys for his techynge iiij*l.*

1555. It^m^ paid to the Schole Master for one yere xvij*l.* vis. viijd.
It^m^ p^d^ to the Husher for one yere .. iiij*l.*

These stipends to the Master and Usher are made down to 1640 A.D., when they merge in one payment.

The Master seems to have had other privileges besides his stipend. This allowance for house rent occurs frequently in the earlier Chamberlain's Accounts:—

1572. It^m^ paid to Edw^d^ Monox for a qrs. rent for the Schole Master's house .... vjs. viijd.

The following is the list of School-masters. The greater number of the names are given in the Chamberlain's Accounts.

Mr. Edward Allen ..	1547	Mr. James Williams ..	1682
Mr. Powle or Polle* ..	1554	Mr. Archibald Lane ..	1684
Mr. Beane	1557	Rev. Michael Stephens*	1692
Mr. Robt. Hyde ..	1566	Mr. W. King	1701
Mr. John Tompkins* ..	1569	Rev. James Oliver† ..	1706
Mr. Thos. Thorne ..	1579	Rev. James Hughes† ..	1720
Mr. Pearle	1620	Rev. Valentine Plumer†	1727
Mr. Toldervy	1621	Rev. Henry Vaughan*	1742
Mr. Taylor	1648	Mr. Wm. Watkyns ..	1762
Mr. Richard Roberts ..	1652	Mr. Thos. Williams† ..	1777
Mr. Marsh	1658	Rev. Jon. Williams† ..	1796
Rev. Wm. Whittell* ..	1664	Mr. Charles Bird ..	1829
Rev. Thos. Wootton* ..	1668	Rev. Francis J. Burlton†	1831
Mr. Hergerst	1675	Rev. W. R. Arrowsmith	184z
Mr. Benjamin Prosser	1681		

* Those marked with an asterisk in this list were Vicars of Leominster. Those marked † were Curates in the Parish.

Leominster National Schools.

In 1850, the Commissioners for Public Charities instituted a suit to compel the Mayor and Corporation to augment the stipend of the Master in proportion to the increased value of money. At the end of ten years the suit was withdrawn. The Corporation increased their payment to £25 annually, and, with the sanction of the Court of Chancery, attached the stipend to the Parochial School for ever. It is much to be regretted that this old foundation could not have been retained to its original purpose in so flourishing, and so increasing a Borough Town as Leominster.

THE PARISH SCHOOLS.—The Parish Schools of Leominster have existed for 140 years. The original School-room was built in 1720 over the engine House between the Forbury Chapel, and the old Gateway or Frere Chamber, by the Bailiff and Capital Burgesses, assisted by liberal contributions from the Duke of Chandos, Lady Scudamore, Lord Harley, and Mr. William Bateman. These Schools have been lately purchased by Mr. Sale, the Town Clerk, and the site thereof fenced in with iron railings.

The present Parochial Schools were erected from plans by Mr. Thomas Nicholson, at a cost of £2,000. They consist of a Master's house, and three capacious and separate apartments for boys, girls, and infants. The Schools were opened by the Rev. Geo. Fyler Townsend, then Vicar, on Tuesday, August 10th, 1858, with appropriate prayers and addresses, in the presence of the Mayor and Corporation, the Archdeacon of Hereford, the Member for the Borough, Hon. Chas. Hanbury, and of many other of the neighbouring gentry; and with the subsequent performance of Divine Service in the Parish Church. The occasion was celebrated by a public dinner, by entertainments to the Children and their parents, and other tokens of rejoicing. The Schools are under the direction of the Rev. the Vicar, and of a Committee of subscribers, being communicants of the Church of England.

THE FORBURY.—The Forbury, or Forbery,* was the outer

* There is at Reading a similar enclosure, including in its compass the outer Court of the antient Abbey, and called by the same name of Forbury.

Court of the Priory. It contained the whole space of ground, extending from the gate of the Frere Chamber to the Priory and Church. It has a history of its own, and has been brought by various successive changes to its present state of comely order. It contained in the middle of the sixteenth century only four houses. The Rental of the Town, A.D. 1566, contains this entry:

The Forbury.	Robert Hyde, Scholemaster ..	xs.
"	John Grene	vijs. iiijd.
"	Mr. Vicar's House	vis.
"	The Howse by ye Schalenge ..	viijs.
	Sūm	xxxvis. iiijd.

The Forbury largely participated in the improvements effected in the Borough in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The following entries occur in the Chamber Books of the Corporation.

"1725, July 13. It was ordered that the Pound in the Forbery be repaired."*

"Monday, Dec., 1726. It is this day ordered that the Chamberlain of this Borough do fill up the sawpitts now in the Forbury before the 12th day next; and that a post-rail or gate be affixed in some convenient place to prevent persons going with or driving carriages through or into the Forbury that have no wright so to do; and that a key of such rail or gate be always kept ready to be produced at the Beadle's house, or gaol of the said Borough, for all such persons as shall have any right to carry anything there."

[The Gaol then stood close to the Frere Chamber at the south side of the entrance to the Forbury.]

Its name is derived from "berye" or "bury," signifying a place enclosed with walls, and from the word "fore" or "afore," denoting its relative situation, in front, or before, the Abbey.—See Coates' History of Reading.

* The Pound was only removed and enclosed within the garden attached to the Forbury House within the last quarter of a century. Two mills stood in the Priory Green and were removed within the memory of many now living.

"Saturday, October 22, 1738. Ordered that all persons that have any timber or wood lyeing in the Forbury of this Borough, do remove and carry away the same before Christmas next, or that the Town Clerk do prosecute those that shall neglect the same; and that proclamation should be forthwith made that it is the resolution of this Chamber that no more shall be put there."

"August 30, 1729. Ordered that the Chamberlain forthwith cause the Fforbury to be brought into shape as near a square as may be, and cleared and ornamented, and fenced in with rails or pales in order to secure such trees as shall be planted there."

"Feb. 11, 1730. Ordered that the Chamberlain cause a wooden gate or gates to be erected at the west end of the gate-house under the Council Chamber, to prevent pigs from going in, and injuring the Forbury; and that the ditch of the said Forbury be stoned, and quick planted on the inside, and that Dutch elms be provided by the Chamberlain and planted in a single row."

[These elms were planted from the entrance to the Church to the Frere Chamber gate. The row is yet remembered by many of the Inhabitants.]

That part of the Forbury thus enclosed with a wall and planted with quick, after these improvements were effected, was called "The Paddock," and was let as a garden, and its rent, amounting to £4, was for some years assigned in payment of the annual allowance of the Chamberlain.

The right to the ownership of the Forbury and of the Court-house, standing in its precincts, has been the subject of several lawsuits. In 1630, Mr. Herbert Westphalling claimed the possession of it. The Bailiff and Burgesses, after an expensive litigation, established their right to it, on the antient payment of 6s. 8d. per annum.*

Lord Conyngsby, among other encroachments on the privileges and rights of the Municipal authorities of the Borough, repeated the demand made by Mr. Westphalling for the Forbury

* The Forbury was then described as "a void ground within the Boro'."

and its Court-house. His demand was opposed by the Corporation with a successful issue. The same claim was revived A.D. 1813 by the late Mr. Thomas Coleman who, as Lord of the Manor, supposed that he had a right to the ground contained in the Forbury. The Bailiff and Burgesses, without much difficulty, again established their long prescriptive ownership. Mr. Arkwright is the present owner of the Forbury, by the re-purchase of the Manor Foreign by his Father, from the Assignees of the late Mr. Coleman.

The enclosure of the Forbury continues to be occupied as a garden. This portion of the Town, in such close proximity to the noble Parish Church and handsome School Buildings, is much admired by visitors. The Forbury, however, might be greatly improved, if it was laid out (as it is at Reading) as a public Promenade, with its accompanying accessories of garden-beds, flowers, fountains, statues, and good company.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER II.

ON THE PRIORY.

CONTENTS.—The Priory connected with Abbey of Reading.—Letters given for the erection of its Church, and for its protection.—Its internal disorders.—Its sequestration by Edward I.—An inquiry into the cause of its debts.—Exertions of Abbot Quappelode.—The value of the Priory.—The number and moveability of its Monks.—Their employment.—List of its Priors, imperfect.—Value of at its Dissolution.—Its Pensioners.—Its desirability as a lay possession.—It becomes a second time a Royal fief.—Its bestowal by the Sovereign.—Its subsequent Owners.—Destruction and fate of its Buildings.

THE History of the Priory of Leominster extends over four centuries. During the whole of that period it was associated more or less intimately with the fortunes of the great Abbey of Reading, of which it was a cell; participating in an unequal degree in its honours, but fully sharing its troubles and disasters. It had, however, a life and history of its own, and of that we purpose to gather up a few particulars.

The first act of the Abbot and Monks of Reading, after obtaining the gift of the Priory from Henry I., 1120, was to obtain, according to the custom of the day, a Brief or Rescript from the Bishop of Hereford, entreating for their Church the assistance of the faithful in his Diocese.

"I, Robert, by the grace of God, Bishop of Hereford, to all Christian men, greeting:—I pray you all, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus Christ, by whose blood ye are redeemed, that ye will think favourably of the Church of St. Peter at Leominster,

that you will to the utmost of your power entertain friendly and honourable feelings towards the Brethren serving God therein: and will endeavour to support them with your aid, alms, and good offices. We know and have learnt by undoubted proofs that the said Church is loved of God, and that in it are contained the reliques of Saints in greater and more precious quantity than we can find words to express. We have ordained therefore and decreed that it remain for ever that in that Church and throughout its Parish (in eadem Ecclesiâ et per ejus parochiam) that on every 10th of October a Festival be solemnly observed in honour of all the Saints, whose reliques are contained there. We have also consecrated in the same Church an Altar of the sacred Cross; on each of whose festivals we remit seven days of penance (septem dierum pœnitentiam relexamus): and we have also consecrated another altar there in honour of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine, on each of which three festivals we grant three days' indulgences (in quarum trium festivalibus singulis dies tres indulgemus)."*—

The Priory experienced the general fate of the Ecclesiastical establishments situated in these Borde lands. It became a frequent prey to the lawless bands which ravaged the country during the disputed succession of King Stephen and Queen Maude. The efforts of another Bishop of Hereford are directed to assist its inmates in their disasters. Gilbert Ffoliot, in the very first year of his consecration A.D. 1147, issues this Brief or Order:—

"I, Gilbert, by the grace of God, Bishop of Hereford, &c., greeting:—Let it be known to all that the Monastery at Leominster is so reduced (ita attenuatum est) by long and numerous troubles and misfortunes, that there is scarcely enough to sustain those who may carry on Divine Service: therefore we grant our benediction, and an interest in the prayers of all Saints of the Church of Hereford to those who at the approaching festival of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, out of love to

* See original grant in Dugdale's Monasticon.

God, and of reverence to his Saints, shall assemble, and shall make some contribution: and trusting to their merits we relax to those who are in mortal sin (his qui in criminali sunt) xl days, and to others xx days from the penances rejoined on them."*

The Priory sought also and obtained in their emergency the aid of secular authority. Llewellyn, the Prince of North Wales, issues these injunctions:—

"Know ye that we have taken under our protection the house, the men, the property, and the possessions of the Monks of Leominster; and therefore we do command and require you, that you protect and defend from all injury, molestation, and damage the said Monks, their property, and possessions, whenever they come into your hands; not causing them molestation or harm: nor permitting it to be done by others; and if any injury happen to them in your districts, you are to take care that it be made good to them without delay. So fare ye well."*

The Bishop of the neighbouring Diocese of St. David's yielded also what help he could by the weapons of spiritual censure.

"I, Gervase, by divine permission, Bishop of St. David's, to all duly appointed Archdeacons, Deans, and Priests in the Bishopric of St. David's, greeting:—We require you by that obedience you owe to us, that immediately on the complaint of the Monks of Leominster of their property being taken away, and their goods disturbed, you solemnly excommunicate upon our authority, with lighted candle, all those evildoers (omnes illos malefactores) who shall be named to you, and shall hold them as excommunicate in whatever Parish they may be, and while they remain there ye shall prohibit the celebration of the Divine offices. Farewell."*

Two other ruinous attacks on the Priory have been recorded in the earlier Chapters of this History; the one, A.D. 1210, by the powerful family of Breose, when in haughty rebellion against

* See Dugdale's Monasticon.

his Sovereign, King John; the other, under Henry III., A.D. 1266, by a foray of marauding borderers. The reign of Edward I. effected a considerable change in these districts, introduced a greater regard for law and authority, and caused the Welsh to restrain themselves within the bounds of their own frontiers.

The Priory at the close of this 13th century appears to have suffered more from internal misrule* than from external disaster. Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford, gives this very painful account:—"The number of the Monks had not been filled up according to law, the Divine offices were insufficiently performed, almsgiving was laid aside, the people of the Town were excluded from their rights, and solemn contracts by which they had pledged themselves were disregarded."

This misrule in the Priory was, it is much to be feared, only a reflection of the conduct which at this time characterized the larger Monastery at Reading, and which led to a remarkable intervention of the Royal authority, and to the sequestration by Edward I. of the revenues both of the Monastery at Reading, and of the Cell of Leominster into the hands of a layman. We give the Writ at length:—

"Since this House is indebted in various sums to many creditors, to pay which it is quite unable (without the alienation of its goods), unless for a time at least its expenses be considerably cut down; We, compassionating the state of this House, and willing to provide a release from these burdens for those serving God therein, have taken into our own hands and under our own protection, as behoves us as being Patron of the same, this same House or Cell of Leominster, belonging of full and undoubted right to the Monastery of Reading; and we have committed all its temporalities into the hands of our beloved Roland de Harlegh,† Knight, and have enjoyned him that he faithfully

* See the Register of Bishop Swinfield, recently published by the Rev. J. Webb, late Rector of Tretire in this County.

† An ancestor of the family of Harley. See p. 114.

collect and reserve all the proceeds, revenues, and incomings of the said Cell, that he provide the Dean and Chaplains serving God therein with all things necessary for food and raiment, that he reserve alms for the poor and mendicant, according to the intention of the Charter of the said foundation. We will also that all unnecessary expenses in the household as in other matters be cut off, and especially those referred to under our former Statute, 3 Edw. II., § 1; and that the rest of the revenues and incomings be applied according to the arrangement made with the Abbot of Reading, and of those others whom we have deputed to this purpose, to pay off the debt of the said House, and to be applied to no other purpose whatsoever. Witness the King at Gillingham, the 26th of December, 1276."

This document affords convincing testimony to the fact that even in those days there was a general control and supervision over Ecclesiastical bodies exercised by the Kings of England, and that in cases of extreme misconduct the Sovereign could find means of asserting his Royal intervention and supremacy.

Another interesting question, however, arises, and that is whether these large debts, (which were probably at the root of the general disorganisation and misrule prevalent at this time in the Monastery and in its Cell) did not arise from the circumstances in which the Abbot and Monks were placed, rather than from their extravagance as individuals. It was the custom for the Nobility to look upon the larger Monasteries and to treat them as Caravanseries or Inns. They would, in their moving from place to place, take up their abode at the Monastery for days together, with a large retinue of knights and retainers, and these visits involved the Monastery in very large expenses. During the reign of Edward I. himself several Acts of Parliament were passed in restraint of this custom.* The Abbots again were

* Act of Parliament passed against this practice, 3rd of Edward I.:— "And because that Abbeys and houses of religion of the land hath been overcharged and sore grieved by the resort of great men and other, so that their goods have not been sufficient for themselves, whereby they have been greatly

to a great extent engaged in direct monetary transactions. They had the privilege of a Mint, and coined money, and frequently advanced large sums to the Monarchs themselves in moments of difficulty, and became in their turn the borrowers of large sums. The three Edwards in succession, at various times, were debtors in considerable sums to the Abbots of Reading; and in the consideration of these transactions, in which Kings themselves were concerned, (and Monarchs when they condescend to beg are hard to be refused), we may, perhaps, be less inclined to think hardly of the conduct or want of thrift displayed by these Ecclesiastics.

This summary sequestration, however, gave rise to strenuous efforts at economy and retrenchment. Nicholas de Quappelode, the Abbot of Reading, exerted himself to the utmost to diminish the sums owing by the Monastery. He remitted within a few years of this sequestration the large sum of £1227 (which his House had borrowed) to the Caorsini, who, with the Lombards, were the great money-lenders of the day; and he also paid to one Alexander, a merchant and citizen of London, all the monies due to him and to his partners, and he introduced a general strict supervision and rigorous administration of the revenues.

The Priory of Leominster fully participated in these measures of economy. The union, indeed, of the two Institutions, of the larger and smaller house, was most close and intimate. Not only was the intercourse and passing to and fro* of the Monks from one place to the other most frequent and continuous, but they formed essentially but one Chapter. The

hindered and impoverished, and that they cannot maintain themselves, nor such charity as they have been accustomed to; It is provided that none shall come to eat or lodge in any house of religion of any other man's foundation than of his own, at the costs of the house, unless he be required by the Governour of the house, before his coming thither."

* The route from one House to the other was through Worcester; and this fact gives a value and significancy to the privileges conferred on the Monks by the authorities of that city. See p. 24.

form used in the announcement of the decisions of the Abbot proves that the consent of the Prior and Brethren at Leominster was requested and obtained to matters of importance :—"Sciant, quod ego A. ———de Reding, reddidi de consilio et consensu Capituli Radingiæ et Leominstriæ, et meliorum hominum ejusdem."*

It cannot be doubted but that the new spirit of retrenchment introduced by Abbot Quappelode into the Monastery, extended to its cell, and was seconded by the Monks at Leominster.

The proceedings of the Priory during the 14th and 15th centuries, its liberality to various Sovereigns, its recovery of its finances, its receipt of the support of the Towns-people under the attack of Walter Brutt, its spoliation by Owen Glendower, its arrangement for the accommodation of its lay neighbours, its exercise of authority in the Town as the representative of the Abbey of Reading, its condescension to the trials and deceptions of the times, are related in the preceding Chapters of this History. It will suffice now to consider the number of its Monks, their moveability at the option of the Abbot, and the value of the goods and property of the Priory.

An accurate account of the value of the Priory is to be found at this time in the "Valor of P. Nicholas IV." This Pope granted, A.D. 1288, to Edward I. the tenths of all Ecclesiastical properties for six successive years towards an expedition to the Holy Land. That these tenths might be collected to their full value, the King began and completed in the space of three years an enrolment of all the Ecclesiastical revenues and property in both the provinces of Canterbury and York. By this return or valuation all the future subsidies of the Clergy demanded either by the Sovereign or the Pope, were calculated down to the very period of the Reformation.† This "Valor of

* Chartulary of Leominster, British Museum. Dom. A. iii, Fol. 113.

† See Appendix to First General Report from the Commissioners of Public Records, p. 148.

Pope Nicholas" contains this return of the possessions of the Priory of Leominster.

"Possessions of the Prior of Leominster.	£	s.	d.
At Leominster in the Manor and Borough ..	211	15	0
From Assize, pleas and perquisites, tolls and fairs	16	0	0
Services of Villeins	20	0	0
Mills within and without the Borough ..	28	19	8
Sale of Wood		5	0
Pannage, feeding of swine in woods		10	0
	277	9	8
Of which is paid to the Abbot of Reading ..	240	0	0
	37	9	8
He has at Leominster six Carucates of land, the property of the Prior	6	0	0
At Ivington three Carucates	3	0	0
At Luston three Carucates	3	0	0
At Stockton four Carucates	2	13	4
At Stoke three Carucates	2	0	0
At Hope three Carucates	1	10	0
At Buckland and Fencote three Carucates ..	1	0	0
At More two Carucates		10	0
100 wain-loads of Hay	5	0	0
At Westwood, rents	1	0	0
	63	3	0

The Prior has also 46 Cows and 290 Sheep."

The interesting question as to the number of the Monks generally resident at Leominster has been often asked of the Author in the progress of this History. He can give no definite answer to the inquiry. There is no mention of the number of the Monks especially assigned to Leominster, and any calculation on the subject must be speculative and uncertain. Henry of Huntingdon, and other monastic authors, state that the Abbey of Reading itself was originally established for 200 Monks.

Bishop Tanner, in his Notitia, mentions an Inquisition in the 50th year of Edward III., which gives the number of the Monks at 100. At the election of Abbot Quappelode the number actually resident amounted to 67. Of these 65 voted at his election. The other two were incapacitated, John Box being an idiot, and John Sutton being under a sentence of excommunication.† Now it is extremely probable that although the Prior and his brethren at Leominster would be consulted as to the election of an Abbot, yet that only those actually present in the Chapter at Reading would vote at his election. On the other hand, the Inquisition issued by Edward III. would include the whole number of the Monks connected with the Abbey, whether residing at the Abbey of Reading, or at its Cell at Leominster. If these suppositions be correct, then we have an approximate number of the Monks living respectively at Reading and at Leominster, and find the latter to be one third of the whole number in the Monastery. This calculation may find some corroboration from the division of the revenues mentioned in the "Valor of Pope Nicholas IV.," in which two-thirds of the total revenues were allotted to the Abbey and one-third to the Cell: and which division would be consistent in some degree with the apportionment of the numbers between the two places.

The Prior and Monks at Leominster were entirely removable at any moment by the order of the Abbot of Reading. This plenary power over his distant Cell was a privilege secured to the Abbot from an early period, more especially by an ordinance of Hugh, Bishop of Hereford, dated 1216, (1st Henry III.,) and confirmed by a Bull of Pope Honorius III., which gave the Abbot of Reading license "to appoint or remove the Prior and Monks at his own pleasure."

This moveability of the Monks at the option of the Abbot was made by the Priory a plea for its exemption from all tenths and other subsidies granted to the King by the Convocation.

† Dugdale's Monasticon.

The plea was allowed, and the exemption was confirmed by letters patent, issued by two successive Sovereigns; by Richard II., 23rd of August, 1385, and by Henry IV., Nov. 10, 1403; "chiefly for that they (the Monks of Leominster) are removable and cannot undertake any burden, or thereupon answer, without the aforesaid Abbot and Convent, their superiors."

The Priory has obtained but little reputation as the nurse of learned men. The "superior house" probably retained for itself the services and talents of the most distinguished members of its fraternity.

There are three men mentioned in general history who evidently came from this neighbourhood, though there is little to connect them with the Priory of Leominster.

Adam de Eaton rose from the poorest origin, and became a Cardinal at Rome under the auspices of Pope Urban VI. He was afterwards imprisoned by this Pope, and restored to his honours by his successor, Boniface IV., 1380.

William of Leominster was well known as a Franciscan Divine about the same period, and John of Leominster, alias John of Bromyard, was celebrated alike for his learning, and for his violent opposition to Wycliffe in the Provincial Synod that met in London, A.D. 1382.

The Monks resident in the Priory employed themselves in accordance with the rules of the Benedictine order, in the routine of daily duties, the repeating divine offices, the observing the hours of the Church, the providing for the wants of the poor, the transcribing the manuscript books of Service and of scarce collections, the participation to some extent in the actual labours of the farm, and in husbanding and superintending the general property of the Priory.

The Priors of Leominster were sometimes called Deans. Here is a very imperfect list of them:—

Osbertus, Dean of Leominster .. .. no date.
Philip, Prior .. .. 1200 | Walter 1220

This name occurs in a Deed in the Augmentation Office,

to which Deed a Seal is attached, supposed to be the private Seal of this Prior. The Seal is in green wax, of an oval form; with a Roman engraved stone inserted in the Seal; the device on the stone, a man's head couped at the bottom of the neck. In chief, a crescent; in base, a star. Legend, "Exaltabitur, qui se humiliat." This Prior was chosen Abbot of Shrewsbury.

Adam de Latebury, 1226.

[He was the only Prior who ever succeeded to the higher honours of his house, as Abbot of Reading.]

Thomas	1240	Thomas Stanton ..	1428
Reginald	1270	John Glover, last Prior	1534
Stephen Waketon, Dean	1400		

The Priory was dissolved 27 of Henry VIII., A.D. 1536. Its value had considerably increased since the Valor of Nicholas IV. It was now returned* at

£660	16	8	of which sum
448	4	8	was sent to Reading.
212	12	0	being the sum left to the Priory.

These allowances of pensions were reserved out of the Priory

* "Writ of King, 20 July, 26 Henry VIII., anno 1535, ordering a Certificate of the value of all Ecclesiastical possessions in the Diocese.
"Certificate. Deanery of Leominster:—The Priory of Leomr, a Cell of the Monastery of Reading, in the Dioc. of Salisbury: with the Churches and Chapels owing thereunto appropriated; that is to say, the Parish Church of Leominster, with the Chapels of Stoke, Hope-sub-Dynmore, Dockelow, and Hatfield appendent, and the Parish Church of Eye, with the Chapels of Eyton, and Luston, Orleton, and Yarpole, Brymfield, Middleton, and Kimbolton, thereunto annexed £660 16 8
Thereof in payments to the Monastery of Reading and others 448 4 8
Register of Bishop Booth, Hereford.

to some of its aged members and servants, and were paid by the Bailiffs of the Manor, nominated by the King, as late as A.D. 1553.

To Master Fferreys,* late Chief Bailiff of all the property of the Monastery	£10	0	0
Thomas Pokeridge	5	0	0
Hugh Ramsey	5	0	0
Thomas Charne, alias Plomtre	5	0	0
Walter Broughton	2	16	8

The desirability of the Priory as a lay possession was very great. The Visitor appointed by the Crown to enquire into its revenues, sets forth its advantages with a most admirable straightforwardness, and recommends it to the Chief Commissioner, Lord Cromwell, (if the King did not transfer it to the Prince, Edward VI.,) as "a right goodlye thing for himself or his son."

"Yf it so be that it shall please the kynges highnes to take his pleasure of the house of Leomstre, as it is supposyd that his grace wyll of that and many others moo, I thyncke it good that y^r^ honourable lordship have respect unto the same house, ffor onles the kynges grace wyll apoynte it unto his derely belovyd son, ower prince, it wylbe a right goodlie thyng ffor your lordship or ffor y^r^ sone. For I ensure you as I suppose theare is not suche another turf within the kinges realme, lying soo nygh togedre within itself, and within soo little a compas, and of such value and commoditie as that is, ffor it is worthe a ml of markes of rent of assize and casualties, and alle lying within the compas of v or vj miles at thutthermost, so that on baylie may gather alle the hole rentes of the lordship. I beseke y^r^ lordship to take no displeasure with me, ffor that I write soo boldlie unto you, ffor I entend no other but y^r^ goodness and the wealthe of the same. And this I praye God to send you a mery and a joifulle Christmas and soo manye."

* "Leom. nuper Cella. Feod. Domini Fferreys, Capitalis Senescballi omnium possessionum dicti nuper Monasterii per annum x lib., pens; Thomæ Pokeridge, per ann., c^s^. Hugonis Ramsey, per annum, c^s^.; Thomæ Charne alias Plomtre per annum, c^s^.; Walteri Broughton per annum lvi^s^. viii^d^." Book of Pensions, 2 and 3 Philip and Mary, in the Public Record Office, p. 43.

Henry VIII. retained in his own royal hands this inviting inheritance, and thus the rich Manor of Leominster became a second time, after the lapse of four centuries, as it was originally, a Royal fief. It is a useless speculation, and yet the passing thought will occur, as to what would have been the present aspect of the Town of Leominster, if the Manor had been retained down to these times in its full integrity by the Crown. The Inhabitants must have been largely the gainers in the easier rentals and more undisturbed tenures under which for the two last centuries all Royal property has been held in this country. The Manor only for a few years continued in the possession of the Crown. It was gradually parted with, till the whole was alienated for ever by a grant to a favourite but unworthy courtier.

In 1541, 32 of Henry VIII., the site of the Priory and other Manors were let to George Cornwall, Esq. The first act of alienation occurred in the next year, 1542, when a grant of a small portion of the lands of the late Priory was made to the Bishop of Gloucester.

In 1552-3, the 1st of Queen Mary, some small portion only of the possessions of the Priory, viz., the Cottage and Burgage Rents in the Borough were granted to the Bailiff and Burgesses. The larger portion of the property conveyed to the Town by their new charter, was the lands and tenements and rents belonging to the three Chauntries, founded in the Parish Church of Leominster.

In 1563-4, Queen Elizabeth alienated the Tythes of the Manor, and gave them to Bishop Scory in exchange for various antient demesnes of the See given up to her Majesty.

In 1566, Queen Elizabeth further sold to Sir James Croft a portion of the Manor of Luston.

In 1620, James I. alienated for ever the Manor from the Crown, by granting the whole of it to the Marquis of Buckingham, on the payment of £305 11s. 5d., to the Exchequer for the Queen's use yearly. The subsequent history of the Manor, its gift by the Parliament to Col. Marten, its restoration to

the Duke, its sale to Major Wildman, its possession by Lord Conyngsby, its final purchase by the family of its present owner, are detailed in the preceding pages of the General History. It remains only to narrate the fate of the Priory itself. Its stately buildings being left without guardian or inhabitant, after the removal of the Monks, soon fell into ruin and decay. Nor were the active agencies of destruction wanting. The stones were rapidly removed for the erection of other buildings. The Chamberlain's accounts contain several such items as this :

1557. Itm. Paid for carriage of iiij loodes of Stone out of the Priory to the bridge .. .. .. ijs.

1630. Itm. For carriage of Stone from Priory to School house .. .. iijs.

These were probably the stones and debris of the eastern portion of the old Priory Church, the foundations of which are yet to be seen to the east of the existing north aisle. The Priory has been always preserved in some sort of habitable repair. It was in the latter part of the 16th century occupied occasionally as a residence by the Coningsbys. This reference to it occurs in the Bailiff's Accounts for 1605-6 :—

"1605. Item, in the tyme of myne office paid for wynes by myself and Mr. Creswell, then my deputy, bestowed on Sir Thomas Conyngsby, Sir Robt. Harley, and the Justices that dyned at the Priory with Sir Thomas Conyngsby and my Lady."

It was in the next century let as a sort of Mansion House to the Bailiff and Burgesses.

"Nov. 21, 1741. This day the Common Seal was affixed to a lease from Sir Michael Newton, Bart., and Margaret, Countess of Coningsby, his wife, to this Chamber, of the Priory House and lands adjoining."*

"June 1, 1742. Ordered, That the Chamberlain do forthwith repair the Priory House, and make the same with proper additions useful and convenient for the Bailiff to make and keep his feasts and entertainments there, if he shall think fit."

* See also for further uses of Priory pp. 190-1.

In 1750, an attempt was made by sundry persons to discover a subterranean passage which was said to extend to Ivington Camp. In this search a well-vaulted cellar was found, in which was a skeleton of very extraordinary dimensions, pigs of lead, &c. This discovery led to a litigation between Sir Michael Newton and the Countess of Conyngsby and the Corporation, as to the ownership of the property found. The suit (an amicable one) was given in favour of the Corporation.

"Dec. 10, 1750. That Mr. Biggs take out of the press the lease of the Priory granted to Sir Michael Newton and Countess of Conyngsby by this Chamber, and that he take the opinion of Mr. Robert Harley, or some other council, concerning the lead and stones lately found, and rose (raised) on the said Priory ground, whose property it is."

The Priory finally became the site of the Union Workhouse, to which purpose it is still devoted, having now by purchase become the property of the Poor Law Guardians.

"August 3, 1759. Ordered, That the present Overseers of the Poor have leave to make use of the Priory House, garden, and orchard, as a School of Industry for the benefit of the poor of the said Borough."

Dec. 21, 1797. The Parish Officers were authorised to make the best terms they could with Lord Malden for taking the House of Industry by lease or otherwise for the use of the Parish. Terms were afterwards effected, and a Master of the House was elected, in or about 1802, who held the appointment until the poor were placed under the new law in 1836.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER III.

ON THE TOWN.

CONTENTS.—Four-fold origin of Towns.—The origin of Leominster.—Its first Municipal authorities subject to the Abbot of Reading.—The greater freedom in their jurisdiction the main object of the Charter of Queen Mary.—The property obtained, and the obligations imposed, by it.—The enumeration of its Charters and of its Fairs.—The changes effected by the Municipal Reform Bill.—List of the High Stewards, Recorders, Town Clerks, and Bailiffs.—The privilege of its Court Leet.—Its jury, the 12 men of Leominster.—Its Petitions.—Its Presentations.—The maintenance of its Bridges.—The Butts.—The privileges of its Aldermen.—The antient Watch, Police, and lighting of the Town.—Precautions against fire.—Its Travice.—Regulations about Butchers, Strangers, Scolds, Eaves-droppers, Hedge-breakers, Irregular Marriages, &c.—The Cucking Stole.—Origin of its name.—Universality of its use.—Its various kinds.—Description of that at Leominster.—References to it in the Court Leet Rolls.—Poetical descriptions of.—The last occasion of its use at Leominster.—The antient Commons.—An early example of the grant of.—References to in the Rolls of Court Leet.—The time of the opening of.—Resistance to the encroachments on.—The enclosure of.—The old Town Hall.—Its original erection.—A description of.—Its removal.—The new Town Hall.—The Grange.—The Alms-houses.—Notices of a few events omitted in the preceding history.—The early date of its Representatives to Parliament.—No foreigner to be elected.—Changes effected by the Reform Bill.—A list of its Elections, and of its Members of Parliament.

THE existence of Towns in England may be traced to a four-fold source. Some of the more antient, as York, Chester, London, and others, may claim an uninterrupted continuance from the old Municipia, or privileged stations, established by the Romans during the period of their occupation of this country. The native British Chieftains who rose in succession to authority over their countrymen were wise enough to see the benefit of these settled

centres of population, and fostered and encouraged them to the utmost of their power. In the later period of mediæval history other influences tended to promote the formation and growth of Towns. The Sovereign oftentimes granted certain privileges and franchises to persons settling themselves within a given limited time in a certain prescribed locality. Thus, it is well known, that Dunstable was founded by Henry I. Many antient Towns also owe their origin to the immediate neighbourhood of the Castle of some powerful feudal Baron, who obtained on the one hand a shelter for his humble retainers whom he could not house in his Castle; while on the other hand he afforded to the Inhabitants of the Town the aid of his protection and authority, and gradually extended their liberties and franchises. Towns, moreover, frequently sprang up under the fostering care of some influential and important Ecclesiastical Institution; the sacred garb and character of whose inmates afforded a security no less real than the Castle of the Knight; while the services demanded in return for such security were less exacting and extortionate.

This latter source was the origin of the Town of Leominster. It was at first a small and scattered cluster of very humble habitations, occupied by the immediate labourers and dependents of the Monks. Aided by its pleasant and sequestered situation in a fertile valley, in which abounded every facility of obtaining wood and water, it gradually increased in dignity and importance, until it obtained the usual privileges, franchises and government, customarily allotted to mediæval Towns. It received from Henry I. a Charter for Fairs and Markets, and was required by Edward I. to send two of its Burgesses to that Deliberative Assembly summoned in 1297, to which, strictly speaking, the term Parliament is first properly applied.

The bestowal of these privileges implied the establishment of some governing body, possessed of responsible authority in the Town. This authority was invested in a Bailiff and 24 Capital Burgesses; for the first Royal Charter of Incorporation granted

by Queen Mary, 1554, does not create nor call into being for the first time those Municipal officers, but bears testimony to their more antient establishment; declaring that "the Borough, the men and the Inhabitants thereof have been governed time immemorial, and are yet governed by one Bayliff and twenty-four Burgesses, elected and nominated among themselves from time to time."

These Municipal rulers of the Town owed an allegiance to, and received a sanction for the exercise of their authority, from the Prior as the representative of the Abbot of Reading, to whom the Founder, Henry I., had given a plenary jurisdiction in the Town. On the dissolution of the Monastery, A.D. 1534, the rights of the Prior, and the possessions of the Priory lapsed to the Crown, and the Bailiff and Burgesses exerted themselves not only to purchase certain possessions held within the Town by the late Priory; but also to secure an extension of their authority, in the transfer to themselves of the rights, privileges, and immunities so fully and royally granted by former Sovereigns to the Lord Abbot of Reading. This latter object is the real key note to the true meaning of the municipal history of this period. The mere acquisition of property was of little or no consideration. The Burgesses purchased at its full value, or even beyond its value, all that they received. The vindication of their authority from the trammels it had hitherto been subject to, and the securing to themselves the privileges hitherto exercised within the Borough by the Abbot of Reading or by his representatives, was the real motive which influenced the Bailiff and Burgesses in their proceedings. The facts of the case prove that this is the true solution of their conduct. The property conferred by the Crown under the Charter consisted of two grants: the one, a grant of property belonging to the three dissolved Chauntries of Trinity Service, of St. Mary, and of the Lady of Pity, or of Philip ap Morgan's lands,* which

* Philip ap Morgan's lands are situated near Broadward Bridge, two or three meadows westward, along the side of the Arrow. They have lately been enfranchised by Mr. Henry Edwards, of Broadward.

amounted to £13 3s. 1½d.; the other, a grant of Cottage rents within the Town, belonging to the dissolved Priory, which amounted to £23 14s. 2d.; so that the whole property conferred by the Charter amounted to £36 17s. 3½d. per annum.*

* Two documents exist to this day in the Public Record Office, which contain the exact items of the rentals of these grants. The first is very lengthy, as it is made up of a number of small tenures.

	£	s.	d.
The rental of the land of the Trinity Chantrey is	6	7	4
" " of the Lady or Blessed Virgin ..	5	1	4
" Philip ap Morgan's lands, or Lady of Pity ..	2	4	0
	13	12	8
Deducted for expenses of collection		9	6
Leaving a clear rental of	13	3	2

The second is shorter, and we give it verbatim:—

"Amongst the Records of the late Court of Augmentations, belonging to the Court of Exchequer (Account side), to wit, particulars for grant to the Grammar School of Leominster. Heref. 7 Edw: 6.

"Parcell. possessionū nup. Prioratus de Leompstr in Com. Hereford, Cell. nup. Mon. de Redinge in Com. Berk.

Cotage rente Leompster Com. Hereford — Redd. omn. tent. tam libor quam custum ibm vocat Cotage rente solvend. ad Festa Annun. Btæ Marie Virginis et Sci Michis Archi p: equales porcoes — xxij*l.* xvs. iiijd.

Redd. ibm Rent Ball p. annum .. .. xxviijs. xd.
Tot. xxiv*l.* iijs. ijd.

Repriss. Coll. Redd. ibm p. annum .. xs.

Clar: val. per annum .. .. .. xxiij*l.* xivs. ijd.

"Memorand. The Lordshipp of Leom. lyinge whin the pishe of Leompstre pcell of the sayde late Pryorye, wherof the premises ys pcell, is of the yerely value of fyve hundreth poundes and above in rentes and Fearmes besydes casualties p. annum, &c.

"Ext. xij die Maij A° vijmo R. E. vi^ti p. me, Johem Hanbie, Audit.

"The Kyng's Majestes pleaser ys y^t ye Baylly & ye xxiiij Burgesses of ye Towne of Lemster shall have a new Corporacyon by ye name of Baylly and Burgesses of ye sayd Towne, and y^t they shall chosse yerly such of ye sayd Burgesses as they shall thinke met to be Baylly ther for on yer, and they to have suche libertesse, customesse, and franchesses, as they have heretofore had and usede within ye sayd Towne, and also shall have to ye fayer day ther, and hayth byn kept yerly at ye fest. of Saynt Peter ye Appostell, one

The Bailiff and Burgesses, however, bound themselves to maintain a School at the charge of £20 per annum, and also to pay a Fee Farm rent to the Crown of £16 17s. 3d. Thus the obligations imposed by the Charter exhausted the whole rental and consumed the entire profits of the possessions conferred by the Charter; and in addition to this, for leave to make this bargain, £100 (a large sum in those days) had been previously paid into the Exchequer. It cannot be maintained in the face of these facts that the Charter, either as designed by King Edward VI. or as executed by his sister, Queen Mary, gave any gifts of land or grant of property to the Town. The obligations imposed more than exhausted the revenues purchased, and the value of the Charter to the Burgesses and Inhabitants, effected at so large an outlay, must be looked for in other advantages.

other fayer daye ther to be kept yerly at ye fest of Symone and Jude, and the same to continew that daye. And also the Kynges Majestes plesser ys y^{t} to geve and grant unto ye sayd Baylly and Burgesses to ye *ereccone of a Schole* in the sayd Town, of the howses, cotages, and gardens aforsayd, as much of them as shall amount to the clere yerely value of x lib., and shall have of ye sayd howses, cotages, and gardens, as muche or more of them as shall amount unto other x lib. by yer, after the rat. of tenne yers' purchasse, toward ye *mayntenance of ye sayd Schole*..... ye sayd Borow, and of the resydew of ye sayd howses, cotages, and gardens, as much as besyd the sayd xx lib. by yer shall amount unto xvi*l.* xvijs. iijd. The Kyng's Majestes plessor is y^{t} ye sayd Baylly and Burgesses shall have to them or their successors, paying the yerly rent of xvi*l.* xvijs. iijd. to the King's Majesty, his heyers or successors, for ev^{r}.

"And also the Kyng's Majestes plesser ys y^{t} ye sayd Baylly and Burgesses shall have lycence of his Hyghenesse for the better mayntenance of the sayd Schole and Borow aforesayd other land and tenements to ye clere yerly valew of x*l.* vs. ijd.

"Therefore make a grant to the sayd Baylly and Burgesses and to ther successors of the thynges before re..... accordingly. Ry: Sakevyle."

[Endorsed.] "The land and tents within mencyoned to the yerly valew of tenne pounds, after the rate of tenne yeres purchase, p^{r}chased by the Bailiff and Burgesses of Leompstre, amounteth to the some of one hundred pounds, wh. was paid by the said Bailiff and Burgesses to Sir John Williams, Treasurer of the Court of the Augmentations, as appereth by the acquitaunce shewed. Dated the xx day of June, a^{o} R. R. E. vi^{ti} vij^{o}."

Those advantages were, the accession to the Bailiff and Burgesses of municipal authority, the deliverance from restraints hitherto exercised, the enjoyment of new privileges and immunities not heretofore accorded to them. The Charter itself bears testimony to this having been the case. It secures to the Bailiff and Burgesses the grants of an exclusive jurisdiction within the Borough in matters of debt, assize, and felony, in as ample a manner and form as the last Abbot of the late Monastery of Reading, or any of his predecessors in their Courts of the said Borough, ever before these times have had, or were used to have, or ought to have; the right of having a gaol, and power of their Magistrates to imprison offenders therein; the privilege to make Statutes, and to assert their authority in the vindication of them when made; and the claim of henceforth being one body Corporate in thing, deed, and name, and one Community for ever in perpetual succession.

The greater portion of these privileges had hitherto been exercised by the Prior in the name of the Abbot of Reading. They are now conveyed by the Crown to the Bailiffs and Burgesses in their own persons, and this additional authority, this accession of privileges, made the obtaining the Charter a matter of importance, and imparted to it, when obtained, its true value. These considerations reveal the motives of the long-continued efforts of the Bailiff and Burgesses to secure the successful accomplishment of this object of their wishes.

This Charter of Queen Mary, thus obtained by the perseverance of the Burgesses and by the liberality of the Towns-people, and given at last as a token of Royal favour, remains to this very day the foundation and corner stone of the privileges of the Corporation. It affords the surest title deed of their property, the safest guarantee of their privileges, and the clearest indication of their duties and responsibilities. It has received from various successive Sovereigns renewals and confirmations, with the grant of additional privileges. These will be best exemplified in the following table.

	Date of grant.	By whom granted	Nature of Charter.	Additional privileges conferred by.
1554	May 28	Q. Mary	Original Charter	
1562	June 8	Q. Elizabeth	Inspeximus*	
1563	June 15	Q. Elizabeth	Præcept	
1605	August 21	James I.	Confirmation	Court every Monday; Fair on S. Bartholomew's day, now held in September.
1629	November 15	Charles I.	Inspeximus	
1666	June 6	Charles II.	Renewal	Pye-powder Court, Recorder, Town Clerk, 2 additional Justices of the Peace, Lent Fair.
1685	January 15	Charles II,	New Charter† reducing Burgesses to 15 and nominating them	High-Steward; 2 Fairs, Candlemas and May.
1706	March 10	Q. Anne	Confirmation of 1st Charter of Charles II.	With all the privileges of his second Charter.

To this list of the Charters it may be desirable to add a list of its Fairs. Those marked thus † are modern Fairs, established by the Mayor and Town Council,‡ and not enjoyned or proclaimed by virtue of a Royal Charter.

Time of holding, granted by Charter.	Date of grant.	By whom granted.
Feb. 13. Purification of Virgin Mary	1685	Charles II. Confirmed by Anne
Tuesday after Mid-Lent Sunday	1665	Charles II.
May 2	1685	Charles II. Confirmed by Anne
June 29†		
July 10. Peter the Apostle	1554	Queen Mary
September 4. St. Bartholomew	1605	Charles I.
October 17†		
November 8. St. Simon and Jude	1554	Queen Mary
First Friday after December 11†		

* Inspeximus Charters are so called because the word "Inspeximus" is the first word in the Letters Patent. An Inspeximus Charter implies a ratification and approval of a former Charter by the reigning Sovereign.

† This Charter was never acted on, as the King died on the 6th of the following month.

‡ At a Town Council Meeting, held Nov. 9th, 1861, it was resolved that

The great changes which of late years have taken place in the Corporate body of this Borough, have not been effected by any Royal Charter, but by the omnipotent spell of an Act of Parliament. By the Municipal Reform Bill, A.D. 1832, the title of Bailiff was changed to that of Mayor. The 24 Capital Burgesses were reduced to 16 members of the Corporation, four of whom were to attain the dignity of Aldermen, and the remaining twelve to be contented with the less significant office of Town-Councillors. The Capital Burgesses had been hitherto self-elected, but now the rate-payers were called on to elect and nominate all the members of the Corporation. The Town Council elect the Aldermen from its own members, and when once elected they retain their office for life. Four of the Town Councillors retire every year by rotation, and thus the rate-payers, by an annual election of a third portion of the Council, are virtually made the guardians of their own expenditure. The Borough is nominally divided into the six antient Wards: Etnam Street Ward; the High Street Ward between the two Crosses; the High Street Ward from the Cross to Pinsley; South Street Ward; the Middle Marsh Ward; the Nether Marsh Ward. The whole number of rate-payers without distinction of Wards vote at the annual election of Town-Councillors, and thus each member of the Corporation represents the whole community, and not the separate interests of any individual portion of the Town. Various other changes date from the period of the Reform Bill.

The newly constituted Corporation resigned of their own accord some of their antient privileges; the Court of Sessions, the right of a Borough Gaol, the appointment of a Recorder,

the Leominster Fairs in 1862, and for the future, shall be held as follows: on the 13th of February; on the Tuesday after Mid-Lent Sunday: the 2nd of May; the second Friday in June (new); the 10th of July; the 4th of August (new); the 4th of September; the 14th of October (new); the 8th of November; and the Friday after the 11th of December (the great market before Christmas).

the claim of the Bailiff to act as Coroner, the privilege hitherto allowed to the Burgesses and Inhabitants of being exempt from all attendance on Juries; and the exclusive and sole jurisdiction of the chief Magistrate within the Borough, as conferred by their various Charters.

The Mayor is by right of his office a Justice for two years; for the year of his office, and for the succeeding year. The number of Magistrates is not limited, but as many as are appointed by the Crown are entitled to act. The Mayor and Justices meet in the Town Hall every Thursday, and oftener if occasion require, for the transaction of magisterial business. The Inhabitants of the Town owe them their thanks for the general ability, impartiality, and judgment, with which they conduct the difficult matters submitted to their consideration.

The property of the Corporation is chiefly derived from their purchase of the possessions of the Priory within the Borough, as sanctioned by the Charter of Queen Mary. It is generally let on the easy tenure of a small annual payment with a lease for three lives, renewable on the death of any one such lives. It is in anticipation to enfranchise the greater portion of this property, and to invest it with the sanction of the Court of Chancery for the benefit of the Town.

The Corporation from the date of its Charter, A.D. 1554, to the period of the Reform Bill, A.D. 1832, through the long space of three centuries, has had the privilege of electing two high officers, entitled its "High Steward" and "Recorder." The High Steward (Seneschallus Capitalis) has generally been some influential person, of rank and influence, connected with the neighbourhood and County. His office was to preside in conjunction with the Bailiff in the Leet or great Law Court of the Borough. Many of the antient Leet Rolls bear the signatures both of the High Steward and of the Bailiff, and attest their joint presence and presidency on the Leet or Law-day. The office of late years has been simply one of compliment and respect.

HIGH STEWARDS.

Date	Name.	Authority
1551	Sir James Croft, Kt.	Leet Roll
1570	Sir Thos. Conyngsby, Kt.	Ditto
1605	Fitzwilliam Conyngsby, Esq.	Ditto
1649	John Birch, Esq.	Ditto
1660	Fitzwilliam Conyngsby, Esq.	Ditto
1667	Timothy Baldwyn, D.D. Chancellor of the Diocese of Hereford	Heralds' Visitation Record
1685	Henry, Duke of Beaufort*	Charter of Charles II.
1688	Timothy Baldwyn, D.D.	
1691	Charles Baldwyn	
1704	Sir Herbert Croft, Bart.	Chamber Books
1720	Duke of Chandos	Ditto
1744	Sir Chas. Hanbury Williams, K.B.	Ditto
1760	Lord Viscount Bateman	Ditto
1802	Rt. Honble Thomas Harley	Ditto
1805	Rt. Hon. Geo. Capel Conyngsby, Earl of Essex	Ditto
1832	Honble. Thos. Harley Rodney	Ditto

The Recorder was always a gentleman learned in the law. His business was to conduct the Court of Sessions, and in cases of legal difficulty to favour the Corporation with his advice and counsel. The Chamberlain's Accounts from the reign of Queen Mary, without any interruption from Mr. Warnecombe to Mr. Rodney, contain year by year the payment of the fee† to the Recorder. The Leet Rolls mention his very title and office. Thus in the year 1570 this presentation occurs:—

"It^m. The xii men and the whole Towne thynkythe themselves greved ffor that the Recorder is not sworne, as they byn

* The Duke of Beaufort was nominated by the King, but only held his office for a short time, when it was resumed by Dr. Timothy Baldwyn.

† This fee was £1 6s. 8d.

1558. It^m. Paid for Mr. Warncombe his fee .. .. xxvis. viijd.
1618. It^m. To Sir Henry Townsend ffor his ffee .. xxvis. viijd.
1640. It^m. To Mr. L. Evers for his fee for counsel .. £1 6s. 8d.

in all other good Townes, and desyreth that he may be sworne yerely as all other officers byn."

The appointment ceased to be made on the voluntary resignation by the Corporation of their right to a separate Court of Sessions. Occasions must arise when the Corporation need legal advice and counsel; and it may be worthy of their consideration, whether it may not be advisable to revive again their undoubted privilege of electing some gentleman to the antient and honourable office of Recorder of the Borough of Leominster.

RECORDERS.

Date.	Name.	Authority.
1552	Edward Warnecombe, Esq.	Chamberlain's Accounts
1590	Sir Henry Townsend	Ditto
1630	Sir Humphrey Baskerville	Ditto
1641	Leonard Evers, Esq,	Ditto
1650	Edward Freeman, Esq.*	Ditto
1685	Richard Hopton, Esq.	Charter of Charles II.
1692	Auditor Harley	ChamberBooks
1732	Robert Harley, Esq.	Ditto
1774	Thomas Johnes, Esq.†	Ditto
1780	Right Honorable Thomas Harley	Ditto
1802	Right Honorable Earl of Essex	Ditto
1805	Honorable Thos. Harley Rodney	Ditto
1832	Major Edward Evans	Ditto

* The Recorder Freeman was also a Colonel. He served in the forces of the Parliament, though he became a Royalist at the Restoration. He both conferred favours on the Town, and received tokens of the good-will of his fellow Townsmen. These items occur in the Chamberlain's Accounts:—

1661. Itm. Pd Thomas Engle for bringing the Drum wh: Col. Freeman did give to the Town.

1661. Recd of Col. Freeman towards mending the Highwayes £1 6s. 8d. [This was a return of his fee as Recorder.]

1661. Itm. Paid Mrs. Bond for expenses on Col. Freeman and the Mayor of Hereford.

† This gentleman was at this time the owner and proprietor of Croft Castle. His family held the estate for only a few years.

The first Town Clerk was appointed after the Restoration, A.D. 1665, by the first Charter of Charles II. He holds a very important office. He has the legal custody of the Deeds and Archives of the Corporation, and is required to direct and advise the Corporation in all questions connected with the preparation of leases, the sale of property, or the management and conduct of their affairs.

TOWN CLERKS.

1666 John Stead.	1774 Somerset Knill.
1688 Thomas Stead.	1783 Thomas Coleman.*
1720 Thomas Price.	1836 Henry Milnes.
1727 John Brewster.	1851 Thomas Sale.

The Bailiffs given by Price are tolerably correct after the period of the Restoration. For the first hundred years the names are very faulty and imperfect. The Author has altered several of these names; but only when the name and year of office of the Bailiff are distinctly mentioned in the Rolls of the Court Leet, or in the Bailiff's or Chamberlains Accounts.

BAILIFFS.

1554 Humphrey Streete	1568 Francis Philipps
1555 John Polle	1569 John Greene
1556 Nicholas Bayley	1570 John Thorne
1557 John Jaye	1571 Thomas Robins
1558 Richard Meyrick	1572 Henry Seward
1559 Alban Byrche	1573 John Ken
1560 Henry Gilley	1574 Thomas Shooter
1561 Richard Perryn	1575 John ap Thomas
1562 Philip Ap Rice	1576 John Greene
1563 George Monox	1577 Robert Stubbes
1564 Edward Colbacke	1578 William Badnache
1565 Thomas Dellowe	1579 Josh. Howells
1566 Alban Byrche	1581 John Bishoppe
1567 William Polle	1582 Miles Hackluyit

* Thomas Coleman was made a Burgess and Town Clerk on one and the same day, Feb. 14, 1783.

1583 Philip Morris
1584 John Powle
1585 Richard Birche
1586 William Wanklin
1587 John Bishop
1588 Humphrey Meyrell
1589 Robert Morris
1590 John Creswell
1591 William Birch
1592 Joseph Brown
1593 Francis Ensoll
1594 Philip ap Thomas
1595 John Bishop
1596 John Baker
1597 John Haynes
1598 Richard Bradford
1599 John Williams
1600 John Stead
1601 William Bradford
1602 Thomas Jay
1603 John Bowkey
1604 James Hill
1605 John Street
1606 John Fromer
1607 Richard Powle
1608 John Patis
1609 John Bishop
1610 Thomas Stephens
1611 Thomas Vale
1612 William Woodhouse
1613 John Powell
1614 Richard Parry
1615 Thomas Smith
1616 Edward Stephens
1617 Thomas Pytchard
1618 Richard Scarlett
1619 John Hill
1620 John Bowkey
1621 Leonard Ensoll
1622 James Hill
1623 John Tolderville
1624 John Powle
1625 George Bradford
1626 John Bradford
1627 Francis Shooter
1628 Edmond Stephens
1629 Richard Blashfield
1630 Rowland Stead
1631 John Stephens
1632 Isaac Seward
1633 John Pateshall
1634 John Powle
1635 Richard Scarlett
1636 William Taylor
1637 Miles Hill
1638 Thomas Pytchard
1639 Edward Stead
1640 Henry Powle
1641 Henry Seaward
1642 John Parry
1643 Henry Powle
1644 Richard Kinnersley
1645 Walter Powell
1646 Thomas Smith
1647 Richard Blashfield
1648 John Stephens
1649 Edward Stephens
1650 Thomas Ford
1651 Francis Nash
1652 Alexander Nelmes

1653 John Pateshall
1654 Oliver Toldervy
1655 Edward Hay
1656 Richard Bach
1657 Edward Stephens
1658 Henry Caswell
1659 Francis Adams
1660 John Tompkins
1661 Thomas Hardwick
1662 William Bailey
1663 John Stead
1664 Richard Nash
1665 William Vaston
1666 Thomas Smith
1667 George Harvey
1668 Richard Wanklin
1669 Francis Perse
1670 John Tompkins
1671 Edward Hay
1672 Edward Bangham
1673 John Williams
1674 John Jay
1675 Jeremy Clarke
1676 Thomas Nash
1677 John Withington
1678 Vincent Edwards
1679 Samp. Edwards
1680 John Dutton Colt
1681 Hum. Laurence
1682 John Williams
1683 John Caswall
1684 John Tompkins
1685 Thomas Harris
1686 Richard Hodges
1687 Samuel Seward
1688 John Walton
1689 Edward Bangham
1690 William Bach
1691 John Bangham
1692 Henry Brown
1693 James Winton
1694 Caleb Powell
1695 Edward Bangham
1696 James Powle
1697 Jonath. Davis
1698 James Caswell
1699 Thomas Price
1700 James Caswall, Esq.

From this date they were called Esquires.

1701 John Caswall
1702 Isaac Tompkins
1703 Richard Nicholson
1704 Edward Williams
1705 Caleb Powell
1706 John Winton
1707 Thomas Chelmish
1708 James Caswell
1709 James Caswell
1710 James Caswell
1711 Benjamin Smartfoot
1712 James Ponnell
1713 Edward Bangham
1714 Caleb Powell
1715 Isaac Tompkins
1716 Francis Nash
1717 Thomas Price
1718 Rev. Michael Stephens
1719 Richard Stephens
1720 William Spencer

1721 Thomas Nelmes
1722 James Nash
1723 Edward Bangham
1724 William Vaston*
1725 Capt. John Caswall
1726 Thomas Exton
1727 Richard Baker
1728 William Phillips
1729 Benjamin Thomas
1730 Thomas Sheriff
1731 Thomas Higgins
1732 John Granger
1733 John Bach
1734 Abr. Seward
1735 Francis Kinnersley
1736 Thomas Tompkins
1737 Isaac Seward
1738 Philip Hooper
1739 William Vaston, jun.
1740 John Coates
1741 Richard Stephens
1742 Philip Hooper
1743 William Phillips
1744 William Toldervy
1745 Edward Williams
1746 Michael Stephens
1747 Green Biggs
1748 Benjamin Thomas
1749 John Bach
1750 Francis Kinnersley
1751 John Granger
1752 Samuel Prosser
1753 Andrew Waring
1754 John Wall
1755 William Toldervy
1756 Joseph Pember
1757 Giles Whitehall
1758 Robert Thomas
1759 Richard Rogers
1760 Edward Coleman
1761 John Granger
1762 Benjamin Fallowes
1763 Thomas Bayley
1764 Edward Bach
1765 Samuel Watts
1766 Francis Browne
1767 Edward Granger
1768 Somerset Knill
1769 Samuel Eaton
1770 Thomas Smith
1771 James Toldervy
1772 Samuel Prosser
1773 Edward Coleman
1774 Robert A. Dyer
1775 John Jennings
1776 Benjamin Fallowes
1777 John Tudor
1778 Philip Davis
1779 Weaver Bennett
1780 William Vale
1781 John Hooper
1782 Richard Hayling
1783 Samuel Eaton
1784 Thomas Smith
1785 John Pitts
1786 John Meredith

* A contest: 14 voted for Vaston; 10 for Capt. John Caswall, who was proposed by the out-going Bailiff.

1787 Rev. John Wall
1788 James Bailey Toldervy
1789 Rev. George Evans
1790 Philip Davis
1791 Francis Edwards
1792 Thomas Toldervy, jun.
1793 Rev. John Lodge
1794 Edward Bannister
1795 Tobias Davies
1796 Thomas Proctor
John Tudor
1797 Thomas Sympson
1798 Edward Woodhouse
1799 James Hayling
1800 William Vale, jun.
1801 John Tudor
1802 Rev. James Colt
1803 Francis Coleman
1804 Philip Derry
1805 Humphrey John Stow
1806 John Coleman
1807 John Wynde
1808 Edward Evans
1809 Bonham Caldwall
1810 William Wall
1811 Frederick Allen
1812 Thomas Davies
1813 John Meredith
1814 Francis Jenks Burlton
1815 Henry Gatehouse
1816 Thomas Morris
1817 Richard Burlton
1818 Jas. Thos. Woodhouse
1819 William Preece
1820 Thomas Coleman
1821 H. Lewes
1822 Henry Milnes
1823 Francis Woodhouse
1824 Richard Hayling
1825 Edward Woodhouse
1826 William Vale
1827 Rev. James Colt
1828 Rev. John Taylor
1829 Thomas F. Watling
1830 William Budd Tanner
1831 Bonham Caldwall
1832 Thomas Woodhouse
1833 John Davis
1834 William Newman

From this date they were called Mayors.

1835 James Bedford
1836 Francis Woodhouse
1837 H. A. Lewes
1838 Thomas Davies
1839 Thomas F. Watling
1840 Thomas Edwards
1841 John C. Davis
1842 William Preece
W. Newman
1843 Francis Went
1844 Henry James
1845 Thomas Brayen
1846 T. B. Stallard
1847 William Newman
1848 H. Rudge
1849 J. V. Chilcott
1850 Thomas Burlton
1851 John Manwaring
1852 Henry Herbert

1853 William James
1854 James Bedford
1855 James Bedford
1856 William Gilkes
1857 Francis Woodhouse
1858 Francis Davis
1859 Henry James
1860 Henry James
1861 Thomas Graves

Among the antient privileges conferred upon the Borough, as being originally a Royal fief, was the right of holding a Court Leet.* This Court was held twice in the year, at the feasts of Easter and of Michaelmas. It was conducted with much order and ceremony, and had universal cognizance and supervision of everything relating to the good government of the Borough, and to the well-being of its Inhabitants. All misdemeanours, trespasses, and nuisances; all omissions to repair bridges, water-courses, highways, and public buildings; all transgressions of the bye-laws of the Borough; all affrays, or complaints about the Watch, or about the misconduct of men and women; all neglect of matters enjoined by the Statutes of the realm were presented and rectified. The High Steward and the Bailiff presided; but every matter conducted in this Court was referred to and decided upon by the twelve Townsmen, sworn as the jury of the Leet. The Leet-Rolls from A.D. 1560 to 1665 yet remain in the custody of the Corporation. They are very interesting documents, not only as showing the mode of conducting the business of the Court, but as containing full and authentic information as to the manners, customs, and condition of the Inhabitants. These Leet-Rolls are written, some more and some less obscurely, on several sheets of long folio paper. They commence by setting forth the day on which the Court is held, the year of the reigning Sovereign,† and the names and titles of

* The Court Leet was a higher Court than the Court Baron. Court Barons might be kept by a custom or prescription. Court Leets did originally belong to, or were constituted by, a direct grant from the King. The Court Leet superseded the authority of the Sheriff, and was invested with a supreme and exclusive jurisdiction.—Sheppard's Court Keeper's Guide; Wood's Institute of the Laws of England; Cowell's Interpreter.

† During the Commonwealth the title ran thus:—"The Jury for the keepers of the liberty of England by authority of Parliament doe present," &c.

the High Steward and Bailiff. They next give the names of the Recorder and Capital Burgesses for the time being, and after them the names of the twelve men sworn as the jury of that present Leet. It is to be remarked that the Jury really consisted of fifteen persons, and that number is always sworn on the Jury. They are, however, known and described as "the xii men," or "the xii men of the Jury."

The Leet Rolls next contain the list of the names of all the Inhabitants of the six Wards into which the Borough was divided, each signed by its respective Constables. These names were stated at length for two reasons; to prevent the settlement of strangers within the Town without the permission of the authorities; and to enable the Steward and Bailiff to elect a proper Jury.

The Leet Rolls are next filled up with what are called the Petitions and the Presentations. The Petitions are letters of complaint from some of the Inhabitants praying for the redress of trespasses and encroachments, or for the removal of nuisances, or for the maintenance and vindication of antient rights. The following examples will suffice to show their general purport and the form of address adopted in them, and also, in some degree, the mode of conducting the proceedings of the Leet-Court.

[A.D. 1567.] "To the Worshypfull Mr. Steward and Mr. Bailyff of this Borough of Leom^{r} and to others the Quene's Majesties Officers ther̄.

"In o^{r} most humble wyse complaynyng unto yo^{r} good w^{r}shippes, yo^{r} orators and dayly bedmen, the artyfficers bakers of this Borough: that whereas yo^{r} seid orators dyvers and sundry tymes have complaynyd unto this Worshipfull Com̄y, that your seid orators, being comon Vittulers of this borrough, can have no good orders, accordyng as is used in all other cyvell and good Cytyes and Townes w^{n} this realme of England, by means whereof the comon-wealth of this borrough decayes, and the good report and name of this Borrough for the makyng of good past, as also for the

makyng of horse bred* is goon and decayed: thereffore hit may plese yr worshippes, the prmises considered, to take some goodly order herein; and this for God's love. Yor Orators the Artyfficers and Bakers."

The Jury on this Petition laid down certain rules to be observed both for the baking and selling of bread.

[A.D. 1570.] "To the Worshipfull Mr. Baylyf and Mr. Steward of the Borrough of Leompster for the kepyng of the greate Lawe-day there.

"In most humble wise complayning unto yor Worshippes, youre orator and dayly bed-woman, Elizabeth Passye, Widowe, of this Borrough, that whereas yor oratryz holdythe of the demyse and graunt of the Chamber of this Borrough one shoppe in the Bocher-rowe of this Borrough. So it is, may it please your Worshippes, that one John Ingle of this Borrough, Bocher, contrary to all ryght and conscyence, hathe set up a stocke of wood, whereon he dothe red podynge, and by means thereof dammyth up the dore of yor oratrix said shoppe to her great annoyance. In consideracon thereof may it please yor Worshippes to give in charge unto the xii men for this Law-day to take a view of the prmises that reformacon may be had for God's love. Yor oratrix, ELIZABETH PASSYE."

[Endorsed.] "The Jurie and xii men have taken a view of the stocke erected by the wthin-named John Ingle in the said Bocher-rowe. Therefore it is ordered and commanded to hym to reforme the same, and to remove the said block, so that he doe not use it any more to the injury of his neighbours, before the ffeast of Easter next upon payne of iiis. iiiid."

* The survey of victuals was placed under the municipal officers of Towns, 12 Edward IV., c. viii. Several other Statutes forbid "Hostlers, or Inn-holders from making 'horse bread;'" and probably this complaint of the bakers was founded on a breach of these Statutes. 21 James I., c. xxi, and 37 Edward III., c. ii.

[A.D. 1577.] "To the Worshypfull Mr. Baylyf of the Boroughe of Leompstr, and the right Worshypfull Mr. Edward Croft, Esquier, deputy Steward of the said Boroughe.

"In his most humble wyse complaynynge shewith unto yor Worshipps yor orator, Edward Bayly, alias Flecher. That whereas yor orator is bounde by Statute to make preparacon of artillery, according to his art, for the furniture of the Queen's Highnes subjects to exercise shoting wthin this Borough or elsewhere. So it is, right Worshipfull, that although this Towne be populus, yett there are very few that exercise the arte of shotinge therein, neyther any that constraynethe them to exercise the same, but any other games* at will: and unless it were for good will of straingers that lovithe that art and obeyethe the Queene's Highnes, yor orator were not able to lyve wthin this yor Towne, neyther able to make any pvision of weapon in defence from the Queene's enemyes, yf ned were. Beseching yor Worshipps to take suche order therein as dothe aprtayne according to justice, and this for God's love."

[Endorsed.] "It is ordered and likewise commanded to the Inhabitants wthin this borrough, that they and every one of them shall, according to the fforme of the Statute in that case pvided, prvide themselves sufficient bowes and arrowes for the mayntenance of artillarie forthwth, and use to shote uppon payne of ev'ry prson herein offending to incur the penaltie of the sd Statute."

"To the right Worshipfull Mr. Steward of the Law-day for the Borough of Leomr, and other the Queene's Majs officers there.

* A Statute passed 14 Edward IV., c. iii, mentions some of these games. "No person shall use any of the games called Klosse, Half-bowle, Rayles, Hand-in-hand, or Queech-bord, upon pain of two years' imprisonment, and forfeiture of x lib." A Statute of xxxiii Henry VIII., c ix, forbids the use of these games; "Logetting in the fields, and Slide-thrift, otherwise called Shove-groat."

"In most humble wyse complayning sheweth unto yo^r^ mastershipps your orators the Inhabitants of the Nether Marsh Ward. Pleaseth it your good Worshippes to be advertyzed that there are dyvers persons of this Borrough who yerely useth to water flaxe and hempe in the river of littell Lugge, unto the greate annoyance of yo^r^ orators. Thearefore hit may please yo^r^ W^r^shippes to geve in charge unto the xii men of this greate Law-day to putt a payne of vis. viiid. that no man^r^ of person ffrom henceforth shall water any flaxe nor hempe w^t^in the seid ryver of lyttell Lugg, ffor Redyng's Haule unto the Popelans; and thus yo^r^ orators desyreth for God's love. Yo^r^ orators the Innabytants of the Nether Marsh Ward."

[Endorsed.] "The xii doo in payne that no manner of person doo wat^r^ neither hempe nor flax in lyttell Lug, under the payne of every deffault, vis. viiid."

[A.D. 1639.] "Leomster Borough. To the Worshipful Ffrancis Adams, Esq., Bayliffe, John Birch, Esq., High Steward, and the rest of the Justices of the Peace of the sayd Borough.

"Edward Russell and Susanna, his wife, late of this Borough, humbly complayning shew that whereas the said Edward and Susanna are possessed of a certaine parcell of arrable land, lying and being in a certaine Croft adjoyning to the way called the Bargates, w^t^hin the libertyes of this borrough: and whereas one Richard Soudamore hath one other parcell of land in the same Croft, adjoyning unto the sayd land of your orators; the sayd Richard hath erected a certaine hedge upon the land of y^r^ complaynants, whereby they are much damnified.

"May it therefore please your Worsh^ps^ to give order to the jury sworne for this Leet to take a view of the premises, and to put the sayd Richard under a payne to reforme the same by a certaine day, and your orators shall ever pray, &c."

[Endorsed.] "Ordered by this Jury that Richard Scudamore doe remove the hedge mencioned in this Bill before the 24th day of August next, upon payne of paying xxxxs."

The larger portion of the Leet-Rolls is occupied with the "Presentations." These are the acts of the Jury of the Leet, but they do not appear to have been much heeded or cared for, as the same Presentations threatening to the same persons the same pains and penalties for the same offences occur for many years in succession. These Leet-Rolls refer at one time or other to every variety of subject. They give a faithful picture of the condition of the Town as to its police, its watch, its lighting, its bridges, and the observance or non-observance by the Inhabitants of the statutes and requirements of the day. They tend also to illustrate many customs and practices now obsolete, and phases of thought and action long forgotten and past away.

The Court Leet inquires into the loyalty of the Inhabitants.

[A.D. 1571.] "It^{m}, hit is commaunded by the xii men that ye persons herunder namyd shall bryng in their sonnes and servants to be sworne unto the Queene's Majestie by the next Law-daye, under the penalty in the Statute in such case provided."

[A.D. 1663.] "It^{m}, we doe present the persons under-named for refusing to take the oaths of allegiance and supremasye when lawfully tendered.* Charles Barnett, Nathaniel Smith, Titus Meredith."

The Court Leet requires repair of bridges. and presents the various Companies or guilds for neglecting to repair the bridges allotted to their respective custody.

[A.D. 1635.] "They present the fellowship of Tanners to have incurred the penalty of xxs. for not repayring the north end of Kenwater Bridge; and also the ffellowship of Bochers for

* This confirms the view of the general loyalty of the Inhabitants at this time given in p. 134-6 of this History, as only three persons were found to refuse the oaths of allegiance to Charles II. These three names will be found in the Hearth-Roll, p. 140-4.

not repairing the Middle Bridge in the Lower Marsh Broad, and it is ordered that they repair the said bridges at or before the second of Februarie next upon the like payne of xxs."

[A.D. 1650.] "They present the Companie and ffellowship of Mercers of the said Borough for not keeping of Pinsley Bridge in sufficient reparacons."

They present the Company of Glovers for not scowring the bridge called the Glovers' Bridge; and also the Company of Walkers for not repairing the Red Crosse Bridge.

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, that the Bakers within this Borough shall from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, maynetayne and kepe the Corne Market howse in good and sufficient reparacons."

The Court Leet superintends the preservation of the waters, and fishing in the Lugg.

[A.D. 1567.] "Itm, it is ordered by this jury that noe Glover, nor other within this Burrough, shall wash or cause to be washed any skin or skins in the River Pinsley, neere unto Pinsley Bridge, after the howers of eight of the clocke in the morning in the winter tyme, nor after the hours of seaven of the clocke in the morning in the summer tyme, nor before the hour of ffoure of the clocke in the afternoon in the winter tyme, nor before the houre of seaven of the clocke in the afternoon in the summer tyme, upon the payne of 6d. for every such defaulte."

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, it is ordered that noe Inhitants within this Borough shall fish or use any unlawful engynes or nets to tak fish, contrary to the Statues, upon payne of xxs. for every one offending."

"We fynd these psons herein-namyd to be comyn destroyers of the waters with their comon and unlawful fysshyng, wherefore they are in the Queene's mercy under payne of vis. viiid."

The Court Leet attests the erection of two Butts at Leominster, and frequently enforces on the Inhabitants the more diligent practice at them.

[A.D. 1563.] "It^m, we ffynd a servant of Humphrey Crowthers, a sonne of Edward Baker, a prentyse of Rowland Towsey, to lack bowes and arrowes* accordyng to the Statute."

[A.D. 1571.] "They do present that the Buttes in the Darke-lane are ruynous and in decay for lack of reparations, and it is commanded to the Inhabitants of the Myddle Marsh Warde to repaire the said Buttes before the feast of St. John the Baptist next, on payne of vis. viiid."

"Item, they present that the Butts in the Nether Marsh Brode are ruynous and in decay for lack of reparation, and it is commanded to all the Inhabitants of the Nether Marsh Warde to repair and amende the same Butts before the feast of St. John Baptist next, on payne of vis. viiid."

"It^m, it is commanded to the whole Inhabytants of this Burrough to make two payre of buttes according to the Statute in that case provided; the one payre to be made in the Etenam St. Brode, and the other in the Marsh Brode, under the lyke payne. The highe Street Warde between the two Crosses, the burges Streete and Corne-Market Warde to make the butte in Etnam Strete Brode; and the High Strete Ward between the Cross and Pinsley, the Myddell Marsh and the Nether Marsh Warde to make the butte in the Marsh Brode by the Ascencyon day next, under the same payne; and that the Constables of the same Wardes do see the same done under the payne of fforfayture of the Statute."

[A.D. 1573.] "They present the persons undernamyd, for that they have not bows and arrows and use shooting according

* These were dignified by the name of "Artillerie." A Statute was passed 23 Henry VIII., c. ix, for the mayntayning artillerie, and the debarring of unlawful games. They are also made subject to the inquiry of the Leet Court by a Statute passed 2 Edward VI., c. v.

to the form of shooting in that case provided; wherefore they are in the Queene's mercy, and it is commanded to them to provide and get them bows and arrows, and use to shoot before the Annuntiation of Our Lady next, on pain of vis. viiid. every of them in default."

"1635. Item, they present the Inhitants of this Borough to have incurred the payne and penaltie in the Statute for not using the arte of shoting in long bows, according to the Statute in that case made and provided, and it is ordered that they and every one of them, according to the tenor of the law, shall use and exercise the said art of shoting in long bows as the lawes of this realme is declared, upon the payne and penaltie in that behalf made, menconed, and sett downe."

The Court Leet reveals some of the privileges and responsibilities of the Aldermen; sets forth some interesting particulars of the antient watch, police, and lighting of the Town.

[A.D. 1564.] "It^m^, it is agreed that hit shall be leafful ffor every Burges of this Borrough to ffyshe iij tymes in the weeke ffor his owne use acordyng to the ould custom w^h^ all maner of lawfful neats and gynnes, and not above iij tymes in the wyke, under a payne of vis. viijd. on makyng deffault."

[A.D. 1573.] "It^m^, it is ordered to all and every the Capital Burgesses of this Borough, and also to every Inn-holder and Victualler within this Borough, that they and every of them shall every night that the moone doth not shine, hang out at their doores, windows, or other convenient place, a lanterne and candle burning from the feast of All Saints unto the Purification of Our Lady, upon payne of every Capital Burgess for offending to forfeit for every such offence viiis. ivd., and every other Inn-holder and Victualler xiid."

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, it is ordered that every Alderman that hath ben Baylif within this Borough, and every Inn-holder and Ale-house keper within this Borough shall every nyght,

when the moone does not shine, from the 21st day of October until the 2nd day of ffebruary in every year, hang forth and kepe at their doore a sufficient lantern and candle lighted in it from vi of the clock at night until ix of the clock, upon payne of iiijd. for every tyme offending, to be levied by distresse."

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, It is ordered that every Inhabitant within this Borough that ought to watch, shall watch in their owne persons or else provide some honest sufficient and credible man to watch for him for whom he shall give his worde or warrant to the constables that shall charge the watch that such person so provided shall honestly behave himself and truly watch according to the statute in that case made and provided, videlt from sun setting to sun rising upon pain of 12d. It is also ordered that none shall watch 2 nyghts together on payne of 12d., and that the constables shall not permitt any to watch but such as are limitted to this order."

[A.D. 1635.] "It is ordered that all Inhabitants of this Borough as well batchelours as others occuping any trade within the said Borough shall provide and kepe in readyness a sufficient fforrest bill, gloife, or holberd in their howses or shops, and the same shall have in readyness upon payne of every one in default when view shall be taken by the constables xiid. And that the constables shall twice every yere survey and see that the same be in a readynes, and p^rsent the fact to Mr. Baylif of this Borough upon payne of xiid. for every one refusing or neglecting to take a survey thereof in their severall respective wards."

The Court Leet Rolls shew the precautions adopted against fire.

"Item, upon a serious consideration had of the miserable unffortunes that happened in diverse places by fire, to the greate and grevous losse and impoverishing of many people,

from which God in his mercy hath graciously defended this Town, (his name be ever blessed for it); the jury have thought it good and necessary, and so have ordered with the consent of Mr. Bayliff, the Steward, and Justices of Peace within this Borough, that to the powles with hooks that are provided to pull down houses in case of necessitie there shall be at the generall charge of the Inhabitants iron rings and staples fastened, and two sufficient ropes of twelve fedome a piece in length with hookes at one end provided for every powle to fasten to those rings and staples, that so the more company and greater strength of people may help to pull and haul at the same in time of need (which God ever prevent); and that the powles, ropes, and buckets (provided for that purpose) shall be placed in some convenient place in the Church; and that no person shall take any one of them from thence but in case of necessitie upon payment of xxs. for every time, to be levied upon his or their goods or chattels that shall take away from thence (contrary to this order) to the use of the poore of this Borough by way of distress; rendering the overplus (if any there be) to the first owner."

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, They p^r^sent the p^r^sons under named and their landlords and landladies to have incurred the payne of xl^s^ for making fyre in their howses without chimneyes or ffymbrells, and for avoyding of dangers it is ordered that they and every of them shall make chymnyes or ffymbrells in their howses before the 1st day of August next upon the like payne of xl^s^."

"Item, It is ordered that the Buckets provided for the use of the Towne shall be placed and hanged in the Church, and that the same or any of them shall not be taken out upon any occacon unless it shall be the occacon of fire, which God prevent, upon payne of every one that shall take thence any away, x^s^."

"Item, They present Edward Elcock and Thomas Keene for there forges in there severall houses wherein they now dwell in the Burges Stt. within the liberties of this Borough, they being very dangerous, for ffire and for endangering the said Streette, and therefore it is ordered that they reforme the same before the 2nd day of February next upon payne of xl^{s}."

The Court Leet Rolls mention the 'Travice,' or ancient enclosure, near the Cross, set apart for the careful reception of the horses of those who attended the markets.

[A.D. 1625.] "Item, It is ordered by this Jury that noe Badger or any other person shall leave, tye, or ffasten their horses mares, or geldings before any doore or window in the Streets of this Borrough neere to the Markett-place upon the Markett day any longer than whilst they be loadinge or unloadinge (except it be at the Smith's Travice) upon payne of forfiture for every horse, mare, or geldinge soe left fastened or tyed 4d. And that it shall and may be Lawfull for the Beadle or any other persons appointed overseers of the Markett in that behalf to take and impound all such horses, mares, or geldings which he or they shall finde soe Left, Tyed, or Fastened. And the same to Impound, deteyne, and keepe untill the owners thereof shall pay for every horse, mare, or geldinge soe left fastened, 4d."

[A.D. 1650.] "Item, They p^{r}sent Abraham Greene for erecting and building a Travase in the Street before his shoppe being a great nuisance.* And it is ordered that he reforme the same before the first day of March next upon the payne of 40s."

* There is no cause of wonder in finding the erection of a "Travice" in the Street, forbidden as a nuisance. It is thus described, "A Travice, or Travase, was a small enclosure, or oblong quadrangle consisting of 4 pillars or posts kept together by cross poles, for keeping in, or holding unruly horses in the time of shoeing, or any other operation." Bayley's Dictionary.

The Court Leet presents for the infraction of all Bye-laws of the Borough.

"It is ordered that all fforran Buchers shall bringe hide, skips, and tallow with their flesh which they bring to put to sale according to the statute made and provided. It is ordered that all fforran Buchers doe not presume to sell any of their fflesh upon any Markett day before houre of nine of the clocke in the morning, nor after the houre of ffive of the clocke in the afternoone, upon the forfiture of all that flesh which they shall put to sale after the same tyme lymited; and that it shall be lawfull for the sargants-at-mace do distrayne upon the goods of the offenders."

[A.D. 1538.] "Item, We do present all the Bochers whose namys are hereunder namyd in Deffault ffor the kyllyng of Caulves under the age of v wekes contrary to the statute in that case p^rvided."*

[A.D. 1638.] "Item, They present the persons undernamed to have severally incurred the payne or penaltie in the statute menconed for killing of Calves under the age of v weekes, and for puffing and wyndeing of flesh."

Twelve persons fined.

The Court Leet presents for punishment various offenders.

"Item, They present the Constables of the Highe Strete warde for they have not pvided one buckett in the bocherie well, therefore they are in the Quene's m^rcie and it is commanded to them to pvide one good and sufficient buckett for the said well before the feast of Crismas next on payne of x^s."

* The killing of Calves before they were five weeks old was made enquirable of in the Leet by a Statute passed xxvii of Henry VIII. The custom was forbidden, 1 James I, c. xxii, s. 3., "And be it enacted, that no Butcher, or other person, after the Feast of St. Bartholomew next coming, shall kill any Calf to sell, being under five weeks old, upon pain of forfeit for every Calf to be killed or sold, six shillings and eightpence." Repealed, 22 & 23 Charles II, c. xix, s. 13.

"Item, Hit is comanded by the xii men that no manner of p̄son nor p̄sons shall washe any clothes w^tin iij yardes of the well in the Southe Strete under the payne of xii^d for ev^ry deffault."

"Item, Yt is agreede by the xii men that every warde havinge common wells shall kepe them sufficientlie repared sub pœnâ vii^s in quolibet def. And also shall not enlarge the cheynes thereof otherwyse than shall be allowed by the warde, sub pœnâ xii^d in quolibet default."

"Item, We ffynd deffault w^t these p^rsons hereunder namyd ffor that they have not tanned theyre leather accordyng to the statute in that case p^rvided wherefore they are in the quene's mercye

xx^d Chrystop^r Smyth.	xx^d Tho^s Luggare.
xx^d Ric. Smyth.	xx^d Wylton Perryn.
xx^d Wyllmm Cadnege.	xx^d Harry Whited.

[A.D. 1633.] Item, It is ordered that no Inhabitant within this Borough shall synge any swyne or thresh any hempe or flax under the Gate house of the said Borough upon payne of x^d for every tyme offending."

"Item, They p^rsent the persons undernamed to have severally incurred the payne of xl^s for suffering strangers late come to towne to dwell in their howses not having given securitie to save the parish harmeless contrary to an order heretofore made and ordered to remove them."

"Item, It is commanded by the xii men that no Inhabitant of this Borough shall receave into his house any inmate w^tout lycense of Mr. Baily of this Borrough for the tyme beying under the payne of vi^s viii^d."

[A.D. 1633.] "Item, The xii men do ffynde Lucy Howell and Marryan Taylor ffor comon Skouldes. And we fynde Lucy Howell ffor the kepynge of an inmate whearfore she hath lost the payne of x^s vi^d."

1564. "Item, We fynd Jane the wyfe of Thomas Parker to be a comon Skowld."

1567. "Item, They present Margaret Marchand for a common skold. And also Sybble Bolles, and Sara Glasse."

[A.D. 1630.] "Item, They p^rsent the p^rsons undernamed for comyn Drunkards, vidzt., Roger Davies and his wife, Thos Davies and Griffyth Parry, and it is ordered that they be drunke no more upon the penalty in the Statute menconed."

[A.D. 1578.] "Item, They present that Philipp Bennett is an Eavesdropper and doth harbour under the wall and windows of his neighbours."

"Item, The xii men do ffynd these p^rsons hereunder wrytten ffor commyn Hedgebrekers whearefore they are in the Quene's mercy and under the correcion of Mr. Bayliff of this Burrugh."

[A.D. 1650.] "Item, They present Richard Parry for an assault and bloodshed upon the bodie of Richard Ffoyd that he hath incurred the penaltie in the Statute menconed in that case made and provided."

[A.D. 1571.] "Item, They present that the p^rsons undernamyd have incurred the payne of £v for sellinge wynes in their howses at excessive p^rses contrary to the form of the Statute in that case p^rvided.

Thomas Poull.
Robert Stubbs.
John Caswell, Gent."

[A.D. 1660.] "Item, Also they present the persons under named for not keeping sufficient grates or doores before their respective Taverne stayres as on theyr heads appeareth.

Mr. John Bond, 3^s 4^d
Mr. Hugh Silley, 3^s 4^d
Mr. Titus Meredith, 3^s 4^d."

[A.D. 1574.] Item, The xii men do ordayne and appoint Ric: Maberley and Harry Pinton as Ale-tasters ffor this yere, and John Holand and Walter Caldwell ffor Fysh-tasters: and they to have ffor theyre paynes as hath been heretofore accustomyd, viz., the Ale-tasters to have of ev^{ry} brewer and aleseller a gallond of ale at crysmas, and a gallon of ale at whitsontyde."

"Item, The xii men dothe conffyrme the order made by the last xii men for the sellyng of ale and bere at an ob̄ the quart and ij ob̄ the gallon; and ij galons of smale ale ffor a penny. And that thys estate shall contynue from court day to court day accordyng to the good discrecion of Mr. Baylyff of this borroughe ffor the tyme beyng, (beyng the Clerke of the markett w^{h} is in this Borrough.")

"Item, It is commanded by the xii men that John Corfyld, Will^{m} Aryne, Ric. Meyryche shall cleanse the water-course caulled the Towne Dyche anent their groundes in the Southe Strete, that the same may be convey^{d} to ffawkener's ffyld, and then the Inhabitants of Etenam St. to skower ev^{ry} man anent their gardens, yardes, and other groundes, that the same maye be conveyed to the brode by the next Lawdaye under the payne of xii^{d} ev^{ry} one makeyng deffault."

"Item, We ffynd a payne of xii^{d} loste by ev^{ry} of the p^{r}sons hereunder naymed ffor lacke of makyng cleane anent their dores as it was to theme comanded and it is further comanded to all the Inhabytants of the Burges street and all others of this borrough to make cleane anent theyre groundes, dores, and shopps wekely onder the payne of xii^{d} ev^{ry} one makyng deffault."

[A.D. 1596.] "Item, Alsoe they present the p^{r}sons under named for their irregular marriages: in that they have not been published or p^{r}claimed: or else that they have beene published in some remote pish̄es from the place of their

dwellings contrary to a late Acte of Parliament in that case made and p^rvided. It is referred to the Bayliff and Justices of peace within this Borough to take it into their serious consideration against the said p^rsons for punishment according to the Law: that is to say John Wanklin and Sibble his wife soe called: Richard Pittchard and Susan his wife soe called."

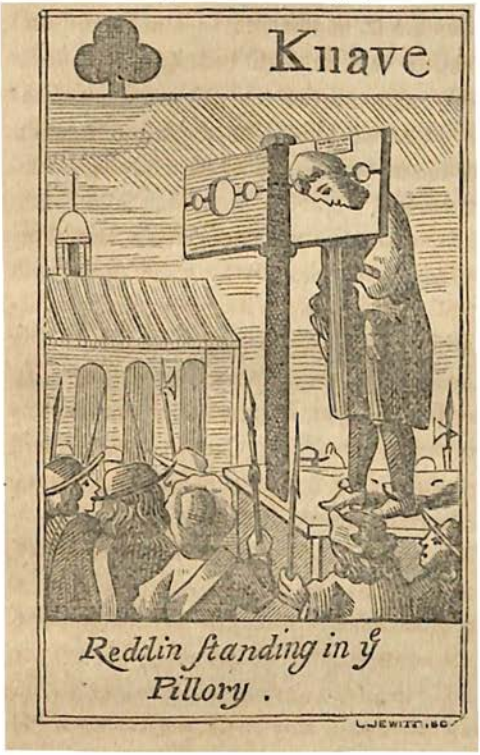
[A.D. 1661.] "Item, Whereas the widowe Price's Daughter and hir childe doe lodge and inhabyte in the Cage within the Corne market of this Borough, whereby the Inhabitants adjoyneing and the people cominge to the Barley marquett are annoyd to the prejudice of this Towne. It is referred to the Baylife and Justice of peace of this Borough to take order with the Churchwardens and Overseers for the poore people that they may have some more convenient place for theyre dwelling."

[A.D. 1635.] "Item, It is ordered that noe Mercer, Shoemaker, Victualler, Glover, Cutler, or other tradesman whatsoever shall sell or suffer to be solde any kynde of merchandize, wares, or drink to any person or persons whatsoever, except strangers and travellers duryng the tyme of Divine Service upon the Saboth-day, nor shall permit or suffer their dores, shops, or wyndowes to be open after the ringing of the little bell for prayeres upon payne of every one offending herein 3^s 4^d to the use of the poore to be levied by distress."

The Rolls of the Leet Court cease A.D. 1666. The Presentations made by the xii men of the Jury, appear gradually to have lost their authority, and at this day the Leet is utterly extinct. The main purposes of its Court, the appointment of Magistrates, the superintendance of the Highways, the repairs of Bridges, and the general affairs of Police are transferred to the Magistrates, or the Overseers.

It remains however yet to speak about one other antient privilege of the Leet Courts. These Leet Courts had in earlier

times the right of inflicting punishments on offenders within the limits of their respective jurisdictions: and the state of the pillory, (of which we give a specimen in our wood-cut,) the pound, the cage, and the cucking-stole was a constant subject of enquiry, and presentation. A good example of the last of these, the Cucking stole, is preserved at Leominster, and this History would not be complete without some account of this curious instrument.



The 'Cucking-stole'* is one of the most antient modes of pun-

* Very much learning has of late years been brought to bear on the explanation of the "Cucking Stoole." The chiefest sources of information on this subject are these: the curious old Dictionary, entitled "Promptorium Parvulorum," Vol. I., p. 107, 281, 142, edited by Mr. Albert Way; Papers on "Obsolete Punishments," by Mr. Wright in his Archæological Album, p. 49-56; and on Ducking Stools in the Reliquary, No. III., January, 1861, by Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt; Brand's Popular Antiquities, edited by Sir H. Ellis, Vol. III., p. 102; Johnson's Customs of Hereford, p. 55; Manning and Bray's History of Surrey, Vol. I., p. 343.

The following extracts from Mr. Way's Notes to the Promptorium will sufficiently illustrate the subject.

"The earliest mention of this mode of punishing female offenders occurs in the laws of Chester in the time of Edward the Confessor, as stated in Domesd., i. f. 262, b. The fine for using false measures was fixed at four shillings; 'similiter malam cervisiam faciens, aut in cathedra ponebatur stercoris, aut iiij sol. dabat prepositis.'"

ishment known in England. It was originally among the Anglo-saxons a very simple punishment. It was nothing else than the seating the man or woman on a "stool of use," and thus exposing the culprit in a disgraceful posture to public derision and opprobrium. The immersion in the water was no part of the original punishment, but an addition made to it, at an early period of its history. During the 13th and 14th centuries a condemnation to the Cucking-stole was the universal ordinary punishment prevalent both in England and

"It was called in Ang. Sax. 'scealfing stol,' sella urinatoria, in qua rixosæ mulieres sedentes aquis demergebantur.'"—SOMNER.

"The Pillory for male offenders, and Cucking Stool for females, were essentially appendant to the view of frank-pledge or leet. Inquest was ordered to be made respecting the sufficient provision of both by the Statute assigned to 51 Henry III., c. vi; and among the 'Capitula Escætrie.' one of the duties of the Escheator is declared to be inquiry 'de pilloris et tumbrellis sine licentia Regis levatis.'—Stat. of Realm, I. 201-210. It was termed, perhaps from its resemblance to a warlike engine so called, trebucket, or trebucketum. By Bracton it is spoken of as tymborella, and in the Statutes as tumbrellus; appellations likewise derived from its construction.

"The following observation occurs amongst Bishop Kennett's Coll. Lansd. MS., 1033. "A goging stool, a ducking stool, or cucking stool, called in Doomesday Cathedra stercoris, properly a gonging stoole, gong stool, or gang stool. Sax., gong stole, sella familiaris, a close stool. This punishment was always associated with a license and ribaldry allowed to the byestanders.'"

It is difficult to trace the precise period of the change of the antient title of Cucking Stole into the modern name of Ducking Stool. When the termination of the punishment was an actual ducking the modern name arose naturally enough, and has been so generally received, that the original name and meaning has been entirely lost. Blackstone thus speaks of it:—

"Lastly we must enumerate among nuisances noticed in our law, (though in practice it has long ceased to be the subject of prosecution,) that of being a common scold; for which offence the communis rixatrix (for our law confines it to the feminine gender) may be indicted and, if convicted, shall be sentenced to be placed in a certain engine of correction called the trebucket, castigatory or cucking stool, which in the Saxon language is said to signify the scolding stool, though now it is frequently corrupted into ducking stool, because the residue of the judgement is that when she is so placed therein she shall be plunged in the water for her punishment."

"And herein the Ducking Stoole she is to sit and to be let down into the water over head and ears three or four times, so that no part of her be above the water diving or ducking down, though against her will, as ducks do under the water."—Shepherd's Grand Abridgement sub voce Scold.

Scotland, and Boroughs and Manors were compelled, by law, to find and to maintain in repair their own instrument of punishment. It was not only inflicted on Scolds, but was also visited on Butchers, Bakers, Brewers, Apothecaries, and all other who gave short measure, or in any way deteriorated human food. The Burgess himself, important as he was in the social condition of those days, was liable to this punishment on the commission of certain offences.

"If a Burgess shall be in mercy for [breaking the assize] bread or ale, the first, second, third time, he shall be in mercy xii^{d}, but the fourth time he shall go to the Cucke Stool. Ibit ad Cuckestolem."*

There were different kinds of Cucking-stoles. Some were fixed in one place. A post was set up in a pond, or sometimes in the side of a bridge. Across the top of this post was placed a transverse beam, turning on a swivel. To one end of this transverse beam a rope with a chair at the end of it was attached, and this chair after the culprit was properly fastened to it was turned to the pond, or river and let down into the water. Others are moveable, and can be drawn about the Town. The Cucking-stool at Leominster is of this description. It is a machine of the very simplest construction. It consists merely of a strong narrow

* An extract from an antient Charter of the Liberties of Preston, Lancashire, of the date of 1100, given in a History of Manchester, published by the Chetham Society, entitled 'Mamecestre,' vol. I, p. 185.

under frame-work, placed on four wheels, of solid wood, about four inches in thickness and eighteen in diameter. At one end of this framework two upright posts about three feet in height strongly imbedded in the platform, carry a long moveable beam. Each of the arms of this beam are of equal length, (13 feet), and balance perfectly from the top of the post. The culprit placed in the seat naturally weighs down that one end into the water, while the other is lifted up in the air; men however with ropes cause the uplifted end to rise or to fall, and thus obtain a perfect seesaw. The purchase of the machine is such that the culprit can be launched forth some 16 to 18 feet into the pond or stream, while the administrators of the Ducking stand on dry land. This instrument was mentioned in the antient documents of the borough by various names, as the Cucking-stoole or Timbrell, or Gumstole.

"1563. It^m. p^rsent q^d Inhabitan. hūj. Burgi non fecerunt le Cookyng-Stole per diem eis p^rfixum—in mīser^m pœnâ de xxs."

"1564. It^m, we ffynd a payne of xxs. loste by the Chamberlaines for that they dyd nott make a Cokyngstole by the day to them p^rfixed; and it is ordered that the seid Chamberlens do make a Cokyngstole by Mydsomer next under the payne of xxs."

"1638. It^m, they present Francis Shoter, Gent, late Baylif, and the Chamberleynes of this Borough to have incurred the payne of x lib. for not repayring and amending the Cage House, the tumbrel or Cucking Stoole; and it is ordered that the same be repayred before the feast day of St. Michaell the Archangell now next comming, upon payne of x lib."

"1650. It^m, they present the Bayliffe and Constables of this Borough for not having a Gumstole for scolding women, that they may be punished according to the Statute in that case made and p̄vided; and it is ordered that they pvide a Gumstoole before the xxth of June next upon the paine of £5."

DUCKING STOOL, IN LEOMINSTER CHURCH.

There is a contrariety and inconsistency difficult to be accounted for between these presentations of the Jury in regard to the Cucking Stoole, and the accounts given in by the Chamberlains year by year. While the foregoing presentations of the xii men would infer there was no Cucking Stoole during this period, yet the accounts still extant of the Chamberlain contain at this very same time frequent and considerable charges incurred for the repair of the Cucking or Gum Stoole.

1571.	P^{d} for mendyng the Gomstole	viijd.
1577.	It^{m} for repayring the Gumstoole at iiij sev^{ral} times	xviijd.
1595.	It^{m} for tymber for repayring the Tumbrill and Pillory	viis. vid.
1634.	It^{m} to John Gwatkyn for an earnest viid., and for making the Cage, Pillory, and Cucking Stoole	xi*l.* vs.
1661.	For mending the Ducking Stool ..	2s.
1668.	For mending the Gumstool	1s. 6d.

There are frequent allusions to the Ducking Stoole in the writers of plays in the sixteenth century; and every such reference (as would be the case in the present day) excites the laughter and ridicule of the audience. In the seventeenth century Butler, in his satirical poem "Hudibras," gives a description of the Cucking Stool. His account evidently refers to a moveable machine, and as Butler lived for some years after the Restoration in the Castle at Ludlow, within a few miles of this Town, it is very probable that he had the Ducking Stool at Leominster in his memory when he wrote these lines:—

"These mounted on a chair curule,
Which moderns call a Cucking Stoole,
March proudly to the river side,
And o'er the waves in triumph ride.
Like Dukes of Venice who are said
The Adriatic Sea to wed,
And have a gentler wife than those
For whom the State decrees these shows."*

* Hudibras, Part II., c. 4, line 740.

In the eighteenth century there are several well known descriptions of the Ducking Stool. The poet Gay, in his pastoral of "The Duress," makes his heroine say:—

"I'll speed me to the pool where the high stool
On the long plank, hangs o'er the muddy pool:
That stool, the dread of every scolding quean—
Yet sure a lover should not die so mean."

The spirited lines of Vincent Bourne, an under-master at Westminster School, written both in Latin and English, are always remembered in connection with this subject. Bourne, however, only describes with a lively humour the modus operandi. He speaks of the custom itself as a thing not of the present, but of the past.

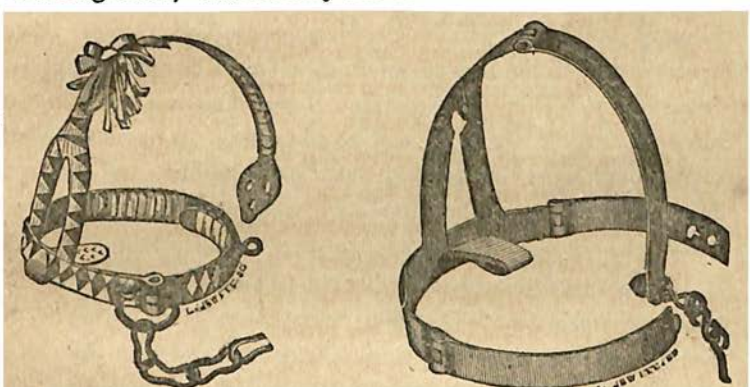
"Near many a stream was wont to meet us
A Stool, to broils a sure quietus.
It curb'd the tongue, the passions rein'd,
And Reason's empire firm maintained.
Astride it set but a Xanthippe,
Then twice or thrice virago dip ye;
And not a lambkin on the lea
Will leave the stream more meek than she.
A Lethe o'er her memory shed,
The very shades of anger fled.
Cool grows the fever of the breast,
And surging passions seek to rest.
The lesson ex cathedrâ taught
Here balance in the scale of thought;
Then say if e'er Socratic school
Such lesson taught as Ducking Stool."

Benjamin West, the Northamptonshire poet, A. D. 1780, describes in detail the process of the Ducking Stool:—

"Down in the deep the stool descends,
But here at first we miss our ends;
She mounts again, and rages more
Than ever vixen did before.

So throwing water on the fire
Will make it burn up but the higher.
If so, my friends, pray let her take
A second turn into the lake;
And rather than your patient lose,
Thrice and again repeat the dose.
No brawling wives, no furious wenches,
No fire so hot but water quenches."

Its use, however, throughout these two centuries was quite contrary to general custom, and was mentioned as a rare and unusual event. The latest recorded example of its use in England occurred in Leominster. In 1809, a woman, Jenny Pipes, alias Jane Corran, was paraded through the Town on the Ducking Stool,* and actually ducked in the water near Kenwater



The Branks.

Bridge, by order of the Magistrates. Dr. Watling, of Kingsland, who has since that date served as Bailiff of the Borough, and who was present on that occasion has described the scene to the Author. He gives his testimony to the desert of the punishment inflicted on this occasion, in the fact that the first words of the

* At Newcastle-on-Tyne the women who misconducted themselves were led round the Town with an instrument called the "Branks" fastened round their neck and head. The above wood-cuts are representations of this instrument.

culprit on being unfastened from the chair were oaths and curses on the Magistrates. In 1817, a woman named Sarah Leeke was wheeled round the Town in the chair, but not ducked as the water was too low. Since this time the use of the chair has been laid aside, and it is the object of curiosity, rather than of fear, to any of the spectators.

"And should all women patient Grisells be,
Small use for Cucking Stools they'd have, I see."

Analogous with the Cucking Stool were the old fashioned wooden instruments of punishment the Stocks and the Whipping Post. These were placed in the Corn Market, and were removed about the passing of the Reform Bill, 1832, after which time they went into disuse. The Stocks were however brought into request for a short time in 1849; and on the 24th of January in that year, James Morgan was confined for some hours in them, for non-payment of a fine inflicted on him for drunkenness. Between two and three thousand persons, at intervals, visited the spot, and so great was the inconvenience to the neighbours that some of them paid the fine, and obtained Morgan's release. The Stocks have since been entirely set aside.

COMMONS.—Leominster, after the fashion of mediæval Towns, was surrounded by its Commons or extensive lands, in which its Inhabitants had at certain times a common right of pasturing, viz., Portna Moor on the north, Broadward on the south, the Mydsummer and Llamas Field Meadows on the east, Eaton Brode and Volka on the south east. The following is an example of the tenure on which these Commons were held.

"This is the agreement made in the Court at Leominster in the 29th year* of the reign of King Henry, son of King John, between Matthew de Goumage on one part, and the men of Leominster on the other part, (viz.,) that the said Matthew hath granted for himself and his heirs for ever,

* A.D. 1245.

that it shall be lawful for the aforesaid men freely and without any hindrance or consideration to enter upon and feed with all manner their cattle and beasts, the pasture which is called Gaumage's Lees, which lieth between the King's highway leading to Eaton Bridge, and the lands of Walter de Mappen which lieth near Brode, and extendeth itself towards the land of Walter de Eaton, from the day of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist to the day of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, when the said pasture is put into defence, unto the said day of St. John Baptist. And for this grant the aforesaid men shall pay yearly to the aforesaid Matthew and his heirs 6d. of rent on the day of the Nativity of St. John Baptist, by the hands of the Prepositor of Leominster for the time being. And if perchance the aforesaid 6d. upon the day of St. John Baptist as aforesaid are not paid, it shall be lawful for the said Matthew and his heirs to distrain the said men by their cattle and beasts found on the said pasture, until full payment of the said 6d. (be made.) And that this agreement may be firm and stedfast for ever, the aforesaid Matthew,—&c."

These Commons at a later date were planted with trees, and certain inducements were held out to the Inhabitants to encourage them in the adornment and improvement of the Commons. This Presentation occurs in the Rolls of the Court Leet, in the latter part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

"Whereas by the mercies and goodness of God there are belonging to the Borough large Commons and much void ground about the borders and banks thereof, many trees as willowes, poplars, ash, oak, and such like, may be planted and set; which would in time bring great profit and benefit to the Inhabitants; the Jury, therefore, sworne for this Leete or Law-day, taking the same in due consideration, do in the person and stede of all the Inhabitants of this Borough, with the consent of

Mr. Bayliff, Steward, and Justices of the Peace within this Borough, enact and order that every person and persons inhabiting within this Borough that shall at any time hereafter set or plant any such tree or trees in any convenient place or places in the Commons or waste groundes belonging to this Borough, shall have the fuell and crops of every tree so by him set or planted, for term of his life, and his executors for the space of ten years next after his decease, so that he crop or lop the same at seasonable times for the preservation of the bodies: provided always, and it is with the like consent ordered, that neither they nor any other person or persons shall fell or cut downe any tree so to be set or planted, nor any tree already planted or set in the Commons or waste groundes of this Borough, without the special license and consent of Mr. Bayliff for the time being and Capitall Burgesses of the said Borough, or the major part, or the greater number of them, upon the payne of every one that shall offend therein, for every tree to be by him or his meanes fallen or cut down, ffortie shillings, to be levied by distress and sale of the delinquent's goods, as in other former orders is set downe, rendering the overplus (if any be) to the first owner. And that the money so paid shall be distributed by the oversight of the Bayliff for the time unto the poor people within this Borough, where most nede shall be."

These Commons were the frequent subjects of enquiry and of presentation in the Court Leets.

[A.D. 1563.] "We ffynd a payne of iiij*l.* loste by Thomas Hackellute, Esquyre, ffor that he dyd nott throwe open the Comon in Lamas ffyldes as hit was comanded: and it is ordered the said Thomas Hackelutte shall permytt and suffer the said pasture of comyn to lye and be as comyn as hit hath byn heretoffore, under the payne of iiij*l.*"

[A.D. 1564.] "Imprimis, the xii men do ffynd a payne of iiij*l.* lost by Thomas Hackellute, Esquyre, ffor that he dyd nott

throwe open the comyns in Lamas ffyld and Mydsomer meadowes, as it was to hym comanded; and it is ffurther comanded to the same Thomas Hackellute and Wyllyam Cartwright, his tenant, to permytt and suffer the same comyns in Lamas ffyldes and Mydsomer meadowes to lay open as it hathe byn used and accustomyd to be, under the payne of iiij*l.*"

[A.D. 1661.] "It^m^ the xii men do ffynde Wyllm Wancklen, Ric Hampson, Ric Cauldowe, for the oppressing of the comyns, whearefore they are in the Quene's mercie, and it is comanded to Richard Hanson to kepe no man's cattell but what shall be his own from henceforth in the comyns, under the payne of xs. for every deffault."

In 1634, the Court Leet issued this spirited announcement of the determination of the Inhabitants to resist all encroachments on their Commons, and to defend their rights against all who oppress or infringe them.

"Item, whereas our late Sovereigne, Lady Queen Mary, by her letters patent, bearing date at Westminster, the 28th day of May, in the first year of her reign, amongst other things did grant to the Bayliff and Burgesses of this Borough of Leompster all such liberties, free customs and franchises, privileges, rights, jurisdictions, quietants, disburdens and freedoms, which the Burgesses and Inhabitants of the said Borough thentofore had yielded or enjoyed, or ought to have, hold, and enjoy, by reason or pretence of any prescription, use, or custome, thenbefore used, or by pretence of any Charter granted or confirmed by any of her progenitors, or otherwise made, which grant have been since confirmed by our late Queen Elizabeth of famous memory, by our late King James of blessed memory, and by the King's most excellent Majesty that now is: all which the free Burgesses and Inhabitants of this Borough are bound to the uttermost of their power and ability to maintain and defend against whosoever

shall attempt, goe about, or intend to infringe, or break the same, or hinder or molest them in the quiet enjoyment of the same accordingly. The Jury now sworne for this Leete and Law-day, well weighing and considering the great wrong and misery daily done and offered unto us by such as not only oppress the Commons belonging to this Borough, but by keeping and detaining part thereof from us to the great hindrance of the poor and manifest wrong to the Inhabitants, do, in the name, person, and stede of all the Inhabitants of this Borough, with the consent of Mr. Bayliff, Steward, and Justices of Peace within the said Borough, enact, order, and decree, that if and when occasion shall be given unto us to commence, prosecute, and defend any suit or action against any person and persons for and concerning the Commons belonging to this Borough, or any of them, that then or so often a general levy shall be laid and assessed of and upon all the Inhabitants for such sum and sums of money as shall be sufficient for following or defending the said suits and actions, and that when and as often as any such occasion shall be given, and that every person assessed to that end shall pay such sum and sums of money, as he or they shall be reasonably assessed at for that purpose, within three days next after demand thereof shall be made by Mr. Bayliff of the said Borough, or either of the Serjeants at Mace for the time being: and that upon refusal or non-payment thereof accordingly that it shall and may be lawful to and for the Serjeants at Mace or Constables of the said Borough, or any of them, by warrant from Mr. Bayliff to distrain for the same, and the distress and distresses so had and taken to appraise and sell, rendering the overplus, after the sum assessed shall be paid, to the first owner thereof."

These Commons have been gradually enclosed, and the rights of those interested in them cancelled by allotting to each a

Old Town Hall, Leominster

particular portion of land. The chief instrument by which these arrangements were effected was an Act passed in 1808, the 48th year of George III., entitled "An Act for the enclosing of lands in the Borough of Leominster, in the County of Hereford."* This Act contained provisions† for the paving, naming, and regulating the Streets, and for the general improvement of the Town. This Act was amended by two later Acts; one passed in 1838, and the other, called the Market Act, passed in 1853. Under these three Acts of Parliament the Bye-laws and the general regulations of the Town are made and maintained. The Volka‡ and Eaton Brode were the last of the Commons partitioned out in 1856-7, under the provisions of the General Enclosure Act.

THE OLD TOWN HALL.—The old Town Hall or Market Cross originally stood in the centre of the Town, at the junction of the four main thoroughfares of High St., Broad St., Church St., and Burgess St. It was found to incommode the traffic of the Town, and was sold by public auction on May 4, 1853, to Mr. Francis Davis, for the sum of £95. This gentleman transferred it for the same sum to the late Mr. Arkwright, of Hampton Court, who would have presented it to the Town for public uses, if the Corporation would have provided a site for its re-erection. On his offer being declined, Mr. Arkwright rebuilt it in its present position in the Grange, and adapted it to the purposes of a family residence. It was re-erected with considerable care, beam by beam, and rafter by rafter, in the

* This Act was exceedingly unpopular. At a public meeting, held May 16, 1808, it was resolved that the proposed Bill should not be even read to the meeting, and 160 persons then and there entered into a written determination to oppose it passing into law.

† The Accounts of the Paving and Improving Trust shew that in the three years subsequent to the passing of this Act large sums were paid for quick and sallow settings, and for new lamps and lamp-irons. The Books contain this item for each of these years in succession:—

"Received from the Manchester Wagons for breaking lamps £1 11s. 6d."

‡ Volka. The word implies "common." V and F are interchangeable, and hence it is the same as Folka, or Folk-land.

exact likeness and conformity with its former self, and is deservedly preserved as a most interesting reminiscence of the antient Town of Leominster. The original designer of this fabric was John Abel, a man of note and reputation as an Architect in these parts throughout the seventeenth century. The Town Halls of Hereford, Weobley, Kington, and Brecon, were erected by him, and are all admirable specimens of the timber edifices characteristic of that period. Abel was present at the siege of Hereford, A.D. 1645, and invented a sort of hand-mill by which the wheat could be ground into flour for the soldiers. His ingenuity obtained for him the praise of Charles I., and the honourable title of "The King's Carpenter." He lived to the age of 94, and lies buried by the side of his two wives in the Churchyard of Sarnesfield in this County. His tomb has lately been restored by the Corporations of the Towns which, during his life, he beautified and adorned with his picturesque buildings.

The exact date of the erection of the Town Hall of Leominster was 1634. The building, as it came from the hands of John Abel, had four small, narrow, picturesque, dormer windows in the roof. These were removed in the year 1750. At that time the old gateway, which stood at the entrance of the Forbury, and over which was the antient Frere, or Council Chamber, fell down, and the Bailiff and Burgesses transferred their weekly Sessions to the Town Hall; but supposing that the roof was too heavy, and not giving credit to the famous old Architect for knowledge enough to adapt one part of his beautiful fabric to the other, they ordered that the roof should be reduced and relieved of much of its weight; and they exchanged the four original dormer windows for the one prolonged gable of the present building. This order in the Chamber Books marks the precise date of this alteration:—

> "Feb. 19, 1751. Ordered, that the Chamberlain sell the old glass windows, lately taken out of the Chamber over the Market House, for the most money he can get for the same."

The arms of the country gentlemen who were contributors to the building, and which were emblazoned on the exterior, have been obliterated. In other points the present building, with its massive beams, its quaint wood carvings, its curious semi-proverbial, semi-religious mottos, is the counterpart of the building of John Abel. These are the inscriptions on the various sides of the building. Two lines are engraved between each pillar. On the north side, as it now stands:—

"VIVE DEO GRATVS, X CRIMINE MVNDATVS, X
TOTI MVNDO TVMVLATVS, X SEMPER TRANSIRE PARATVS." X*

On the west side:—

"WHERE JVSTICE RVLE, X THERE VIRTV FLOW. X
VIVE VT VIVAS: X SAT CITO SI SAT BENE. X†
LIKE AS COLLVMNS DOO VPPROP THE FABRIK OF A BVILDING, X
SO NOBLE GENTRI DOO SVPPORT THE HONOR OF A KINGDOM." X

On the south side:—

"IN MEMORIA ETERNA ERIT JVSTVS. 1633."‡

The present Town Hall§ was erected in 1855, under the superintendence of Mr. James Cranston, of Birmingham. It is a plain commodious building, surmounted by a cupola turret, in

* Live thou, as acceptable to God; as dead to the world; as free from crime; as prepared to pass away.

† Live [so] that you may live [hereafter]. Quick enough, if well enough.

‡ The just will be in eternal remembrance.

§ This building was erected under an especial Act of Parliament, called "The Leominster Market and Fair Acts," obtained in 1853. By the provisions of this Act £500 was borrowed upon the Borough rates and Market tolls, and was expended in the contract and various other expenses connected with the completion of this building. The following is an abstract of the receipts and payments:—

	£	s.	d.
Received from land sold	422	5	0
„ old materials	195	0	0
Borrowed on mortgage..	7577	18	7
	£8195	3	7

Paid.	£	s.	d.
Expenses of Act ..	1359	8	4
Legal expenses ..	363	10	11
Compensation and Site	2167	9	0
Contract	4026	14	1
In hands of Treasurer	278	1	3
	£8195	3	7

which is a good clock. The Royal Arms, carved in wood and picked out in heraldic colours, which were set up on the old Town Hall at the period of the Restoration, are placed in the front of the turret. There is a spacious room on the first floor which is used for the County Court, for the election of Members of Parliament, for public meetings, and for other purposes of general interest. There is also a smaller room in which the Quarterly meetings of the Town Council are held, and in which the Mayor and Justices of the Borough meet week by week for the transaction of police and other magisterial business. This smaller room contains a picture of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, M.P. for Leominster, 1754; and also the halberd presented in 1618 by Sir Thomas Conyngsby. The lower basement of the Town Hall is flagged throughout. It is 125 feet in length, by 40 in width, and provides an excellent Market-place. It is an interesting sight on the Friday to see the long narrow stalls set out with a large display of baskets of butter, fruit, and poultry; and the Market-house filled with the busy, bustling, babbling crowd of purchasers of every rank, sort, and condition.

THE GRANGE.—The Grange* is a great addition and ornament to the Town. It derives its name from the circumstance of an old and extensive barn occupying nearly the whole extent of its north side. For a long period this piece of ground was full of saw-pits, timber, and piles of wood; and was the privileged receptacle of all the filth and rubbish of the Town. It also contained a Kilgo, or large drying kiln for hops, which extended its whole length. There was no communication between Etnam Street and the Parish Church, except through the Town, until 1792; when a walk was made for the first time across the east side of the Grange by the Duke of Norfolk, (then a lessee of a part of the great tythes,) and which is still known as the "Duke's Walk."

* A Grange (a granum gerendo) is a house or building not only where corne is laid up as barnes be, but also where there be stables for horses, stables for oxen and other cattell, sties for hogs, and other things necessary for husbandry.—Cowell.

The Grange House, Leominster

In 1855, a Committee of gentlemen was formed, chiefly at the instigation of the late Mr. T. W. Davics, Treasurer of the Borough, who rented the land of the Lessees, removed all the nuisances, levelled the ground, laid down the grass, planted flower-beds and shrubberies, and by the aid of the subscriptions of the Inhabitants transformed a wilderness into a pleasant and attractive promenade. The Grange is used in the summer season for Cricket matches, Rifle Corps parades, and Horticultural shows. Its walks afford excellent views of the surrounding scenery. On the east side is the Grange House, and on the north-east corner the Sebastopol gun, placed there in 1860. It is to be hoped that the Inhabitants will have public spirit enough to supply the Grange Committee with funds to keep in order such an attractive enclosure, of which strangers express their admiration or their envy.

THE ALMS-HOUSES.—The Alms-houses are situated in the Bargates. They consist of four very small tenements. Each is occupied by a poor widow, who receives the allowances apportioned them by the Founder, Mrs. Hester Clerk. This inscription is engraven on stone in the centre of the buildings:—

"Anno Domini 1736.

This Hospital was erected by Hester Clark, Widow, and endowed at her death with 20 pounds per annum, to four decayed widows; each to have five pounds per annum, fifty shillings every six months, paid them by the Trustees."

There is also a quaint and rude effigy of a man holding an axe in his hand, with these lines beneath:—

"He that gives away all before he is dead,
Let 'em take this Hatchet and knock him on ye head."

The following are some few facts connected with the Town, which it may be interesting to perpetuate, and which have been omitted in the preceding history.

September 26, 1832. A new Survey Map and valuation of all the rateable property within the limits of the ancient Borough and of the Town Wards ordered to be made by Mr. W. Galliers, at a cost of £150.

October 4, 1832. A Committee appointed by the Parish, together with such of the Inhabitants as thought proper, met at the Market-house, and perambulated the boundaries of the ancient Borough as set out in the Charter, after notice given in the Parish Church, and sent to the Parish Officers of the adjacent Parishes of Eyton, Leominster out-Parish, &c. The Survey and Map were made to correspond with this perambulation.

September 7, 1837. The antient Priory, or, as it is now called, Workhouse, sold to the Guardians of the Poor for £745. It had been purchased in 1826 by the Corporation from the assignees of Mr. Thomas Coleman.

February, 1843. Violent hurricane: three of the beautiful Lime trees, which adorn the Churchyard, rooted up, and a massive stack of chimnies at the old Priory building blown down, crushing in its descent 20 feet in length of roofing.

The Theatre pulled down.

December. A public meeting was held for obtaining a new Clock for the Town Hall. £109 collected for the purpose.

1844. Martha Morris died in the Workhouse, aged 105 years.

March 2, 1844. Violent thunderstorm. Lightning entered Church Tower, fused the whole of the Chimes wiring, broke windows, and did other serious damage.

August, 1844. The new iron Bridge at the Priory over Kenwater, completed at a cost of £60.

The Borough of Leominster has returned Representatives to Parliament since the reign of Edward I., 1297. For four centuries two Burgesses of the Town were elected to serve in this office, and probably received contributions from their fellow-Townsmen for their services. As late as A.D. 1618, "it was agreed and ordered that no forener shall be admitted or elected to the office of a Burgess of the Parliament by the voices of the Capital Burgesses, if anie of the said Capital Burgesses will at any time take on them the said office."*

* See p. 98.

The right of voting, however, was not confined to the Capital Burgesses. All the Inhabitants of the Borough, paying "Scot and Lot,"* i. e., assessed to the rates and dues of the Town, were privileged to vote, but the Corporation exercised so great an influence, at least till after the Revolution of 1688, that they virtually elected their Representatives.

The Parliamentary Reform Bill, A.D. 1832, gradually extinguished by its enactments all antient franchises, and introduced into the Boroughs of England and Wales one uniform qualification of a £10 household suffrage. The present constituency of the Borough numbers about 340 voters. There is no record of the Members who served this Borough in Parliament before the date of its Charter of Incorporation. The following list of its Representatives from the reign of Queen Mary to our own day contains the names of many individuals worthy of remembrance and of honour as honest patriots, excellent citizens, and disinterested statesmen.

1553	William Streete	John Polle
1554	Lewis Jones	John Evans
1554	Nicholas Depden	Thomas Wilks
1555	James Warnecombe†	Thomas Kerry
1557	Allan Byrche	Richard Hackluyt‡
1558	Thomas Hackluyt	Thos. Conyngsby
1563	Thomas Dallowe	John Morgan
1571	Edward Crofte	Richard Depden

* Scot and Lot (Saxon; Sceat, pars, and Llot, i. e. sors) signifies a customary contribution laid upon all according to their ability. Nor are these old words grown obsolete, for whoever in like manner (though not by equal proportion) are assessed to any contribution are generally said to pay "Scot and Lot." Statute 133, Henry VIII., c 9.—Jacob's Law Dictionary.

† See preceding History, p. 77-8.

‡ This Richard Hackluyt was not (as Mr. Price asserts in his History, p. 142) the famous narrator of Naval Voyages. The Historian was only born in 1553, and, after passing through the University of Oxford in 1574, became a Clergyman, and was made in 1578 a Prebendary. This Representative of Leominster was a lawyer. He was a cousin of the narrator of Voyages; and being himself a great patron and encourager of the efforts of

1572	Richard Depden		Fabian Phillips*
1585	Edward Crofte		Thomas Wigmore
1586	Edward Crofte		Thomas Wigmore
1588	Thomas Shoter		Humph. Wale
1592	Sir Francis Vere, Kt.†		Richard Conyngsby
1597	Thomas Cromwell		John Caswell
1601	Thomas Conyngsby		John Warnecombe
1603	Ralph Conyngsby, Kt.		Will Beecher
1620	Fran. Smallman		Will Beecher
1623	Will Beecher, Kt.		James Tomkins
1625	James Tomkins‡		Edward Littleton
	[Returned again the same year.]		
1628	James Tomkins		Thomas Littleton
1640	Simpson Eure		Walter Kirle§
1654	John Birch	1656	John Birch
1658	Edward Freeman‖		John Birch‖

the merchant adventurers of the day, and often inviting his cousin to his house in London, he has the credit of fostering in him that early interest in voyages and adventures which led to his subsequent literary connections.—Bayle's Biographical Dictionary.

* This gentleman's son purchased a part of the Manor from the Duke of Buckingham, A.D. 1630.

† Sir Francis Vere was a celebrated general. He was appointed to the chief command of the troops sent by Queen Elizabeth to assist her allies in the Low Countries. He served under the Earl of Essex, and was present at the capture of Cadiz, and at the defence of Ostende. On the accession of James I. he retired from active service and from all public employments, and shortly after he died. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. This epitaph was engraven on his tomb, in accordance with the quaint inscriptions of his time:—

"When Vere sought death, arm'd with his sword and shield,
Death was afraid to meet him in the field:
But when his weapons he had laid aside,
Death like a coward strooke him and he dyed."—Bayle's Biog. Dic.

‡ He was a great Royalist, and had an estate at Weobly. The Vicar of Leominster at this time was of this name, and probably of this family.

§ He was the Governor of Hurst Castle, opposite the Isle of Wight, for the Parliament; and without scruple, in accordance with the order of Parliament, seized the person of Charles I.

‖ These two Members were the High Steward and the Recorder of the Borough. For their history see the preceding pages.

1660	Edward Pitt	John Birch
1661	Richard Grimes	Hugh Cornwall
1678	John Dutton Colt*	Thomas Conyngsby
1681	John Dutton Colt	Thomas Conyngsby
1685	Thomas Conyngsby	Robert Cornwall
1688	John Dutton Colt	Thomas Conyngsby
1690	Thomas Conyngsby	John Dutton Colt
1692	Lord Conyngsby	John Dutton Colt
1695	Lord Conyngsby	John Dutton Colt
1698	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley*
1701	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley
1702	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley
1705†	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley
1707	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley
1708	Lord Conyngsby	Edward Harley
1710	Edward Bangham	Edward Harley
1713	Henry Gorges	Edward Harley
1715‡	Lord Conyngsby	Sir Geo. Caswall, Kt.§
	Sir Geo. Caswall	William Bateman
1722	Sir Geo. Caswall	Sir Archer Croft, Bart.
1727	Sir Geo. Caswall	Will Visct. Bateman

* See preceding pages.

† The Union of England and Scotland was effected by this Parliament.

‡ This Parliament passed the Septennial Act. by which the Session of Parliament was extended from three to seven years.

§ This Sir George Caswall was deeply engaged in the speculations known as the South Sea bubble. His character is not entirely without rebuke, as this extract from Tindal's History of England proves :—

"A few days afterwards, Sir George Caswall having been heard in his place, it was resolved by the Committee that it appeared to the House that Sir George Caswall, one of the co-partners with Turner's and Co., and a Member of this House, did on December 14, 1720, after the House had begun to enquire into the conduct of the Directors of the South Sea scheme, order Walkyns, one of the book-keepers of the said firm, to erase in several of the books the name of Stanhope, and to write Stangate instead, which was done. After this a Bill was brought in to make the estates real and personal of Sir George Caswall, Jacob Sawbridge, and Elias Turner, answerable for 250,000 to the South Sea Company, the advanced price of £50,000 stock.

"Mr. Stanhope was the Secretary of the Treasury of the day, and had been bribed by the Directors of the Company. He resigned his office."

1734	Sir Geo. Caswall	Robert Harley*
1741	Capel Hanbury, 339 votes Robert Harley, 152	John Caswall, 330
1747	Sir Robert Cornwall	James Peachey
1754	Sir C. H. Williams† Chase Price	Richard Gorges
1761	Jennison Shafto —Willis	Chase Price‡
1768	Lord Viscount Bateman Fred. Cornwall	Richard Hill§
1775	Viscount Bateman	Fred. Cornwall
1781	Viscount Bateman, 396 Thomas Mytton, 44	R. P. Knight, 345
1784	John Hunter, 312 Sir Gilbert Eliot, 171	P. Ashton Curzon, 304
1790	John Hunter, 303 Richard Beckford‖ 235	John Sawyer, 247

* Second son of Auditor Harley. See p. 177.

† Sir Charles Hanbury Williams married the Lady Frances, second daughter of Earl Conyngsby, who on the death of her elder sister, inherited the estate of Hampton Court. In 1752 he presented to the Corporation the portrait of himself which now ornaments the Council Chamber, and in 1754 became a Representative for the Town. He had however previously served for several years in Parliament, having been M.P. for Monmouth from 1733. Mr. Williams was a firm political supporter of Sir Robert Walpole, and became from his wit and talents the leader of that influential coterie of which Lord Harvey, Winnington, Horace Walpole, Fox, Earl of Ilchester, and Fox Lord Holland, were Members. He was created Knight of the Bath in 1746, and soon after was employed in a series of important diplomatic missions. He was first sent to Dresden, thence in 1749 as Minister Plenipotentiary to Berlin, and thence, in a moment of emergency, despatched as Ambassador Extraordinary to St. Petersburgh, to the Empress Elizabeth, with whom he successfully concluded an honourable and satisfactory treaty. On his route to England in 1757 he was siezed with insanity at Hamburgh, and continued a victim to that sad malady till his death in 1759 at his seat, Coldbrook, in Monmouthshire, at the early age of 50. He was a Representative on whom Leominster may look back with pride and satisfaction. On his death Mr. Chase Price sate for the remainder of the Session.—Coxe's Monmouthshire; Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary.

‡ Vacated his seat. § Died.

‖ Mr. Beckford obtained the seat on petition.

1796	John Hunter, 462	George A. Pollen, 291
	Robert Biddulph,* 290	
1797†	William Taylor, 328	Sir Henry Tempest, 104
1802‡	John Lubbock, 498	Hon. C. Kinnaird, 333
	William Taylor, 281	
1806	The Hon. Wm. Lamb§	
1806‖	Sir John Lubbock	Henry Bonham
1807‖	Sir John Lubbock	Henry Bonham
1812	J. W. Lubbock, 575	John Harcourt,¶ 467
	The Earl of Meath, 131	
1818	J. W. Lubbock, 493	Sir W. C. Fairlie, 335
	John Harcourt,** 200	
1820††	Lord Hotham, 489	Sir W. C. Fairlie, 314
	John Harcourt, 242	
1826	Lord Hotham 557,	Thomas Bish,‡‡ 445
	Rowland Stephenson, 254	Frederick Cuthbert, 57
1829	John Ward	

* The contest on this occasion lasted for three days, May 27, 28, 29.

† This contest arose on the resignation of Mr. Hunter, June 14, 1797.

‡ A three days' contest, July 5th, 6th, 7th.

§ This was the future Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister in 1834. He was elected without opposition on the resignation of the Hon. C. Kinnaird, in January, 1806.

‖ Both of these were general Elections, and both were conducted without opposition.

¶ In this Election, an Election Bill to the amount of £580 10s. 8d., prosecuted by W. Bach, plaintiff, against Mr. Harcourt, was cut down by a Special Jury to £100, exclusive of £50 paid by defendant into Court, and the Judge refused to certify for costs.

** This Election was contested for five days, June 20, 22, 23, 24, 25. It was attended by singular and important results. Mr. Harcourt gained his seat on his petition; Sir W. C. Fairlie being disqualified, as having no English qualification. The decision of the Committee of the House of in this case led to an alteration of the law.

†† This contest lasted for five days, March 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

‡‡ Mr. Bish was the great Lottery Contractor. He is said to have spent £10,000 at this Election. He lost his seat on petition. Mr. Stephenson was declared the sitting Member, and becoming involved in some unworthy Banking proceedings, was compelled to resign his seat, being outlawed in in 1829; when Mr. Ward was elected without opposition.

1830	Lord Hotham	William Marshall*
1831†	W. B. Evans, 561 Lord Hotham, 364	Thomas Brayen, 413
1831‡	Lord Hotham, 346	William Frazer, 327
1835	Lord Hotham	Thomas Bish
1837	Lord Hotham, 395 Sir James Wigram, 266	Charles Greenaway, 364
1841	Charles Greenaway	Sir James Wigram
1842	George Arkwright§	
1845	Henry Chas. Barkly‖	
1847	George Arkwright	Henry Chas. Barkly
1849	Rt. Hon. Fred. Peel¶	
1852	George Arkwright, 260 J. P. Willoughby, 190	J. G. Phillimore, 205
1856**	Gathorne Hardy, 179	James Campbell 101
1857	Gathorne Hardy	J. P. Willoughby
1858	Hon. C. S. B. Hanbury††	
1859	Gathorne Hardy	Hon. C. S. B. Hanbury

* Sir Stretford Canning was a candidate at this general Election, but retired from the contest after a few hours polling.

† This Polling lasted three days, viz., April 30th, May 2nd and 3rd.

‡ This Election took place on the resignation of Mr. Brayen, and lasted four days.

§ This Election occurred on the appointment of Mr. Wigram as Vice-Chancellor.

‖ Without opposition on the resignation of Mr. Greenaway.

¶ On the resignation of Mr. Barkly, now Governor of Victoria.

** This Election took place on the death of Mr. Arkwright.

†† Without opposition, on the appointment of Mr. Willoughby as a Director of the India Board.

FINIS.

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S. PARTRIDGE, PRINTER, BROAD STREET, LEOMINSTER.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018